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# A MERIT SYSTEM

for the

# PUBLIC ASSISTANCE SERVICES OF PENNSYLVANIA

REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

of a

Special
Advisory Committee

Pennsylvania Committee on
Public Assistance and Relief

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Special
Advisory Committee

Submitted to the
Pennsylvania Committee
on Public Assistance and Relief
April 15, 1937

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# FOREWORD

The most important factor in the successful operation of a Statewide public assistance program is the personnel engaged in its administration. The Pennsylvania Committee on Public Assistance and Relief recognized from the beginning the decisive significance of this problem, and its First Preliminary Report to Governor George H. Earle on March 14, 1936, contained in its concluding paragraphs the following statements:

> "We are especially impressed with the importance of the permanent establishment of the merit system in the selection, promotion and dismissal of employees in the assistance and relief services of the State. Adequate mechanisms should be provided to make this system effective.
>
> "On the details of this problem we shall submit in a subsequent report the results of practical study and deliberation of a special committee of informed and experienced citizens which, with your approval, is to assist the State Emergency Relief Administration in formulating and conducting future examinations for the selection, promotion, and dismissal of employees in that branch of the State's service."

The Pennsylvania Committee reiterated its earlier recommendation in its Second Preliminary Report to Governor Earle, presented on May 4, 1936.* In that document the Committee declared:

> "Finally, the problem of adequate and competent personnel in the public services related to assistance and relief is deemed by the Committee to be of paramount importance in the efficient and economical administration of these services. This involves the provision of suitable means for setting up standards of qualifications of personnel and suitable mechanisms for impartially measuring the qualifications of applicants for employment and for the selection, appointment, promotion, and tenure of qualified employees upon the basis of merit.....
>
> "Extension of the merit system to all the assistance services in which the State participates is urgently advised."

The exigencies of administrative operations in a period of financial crisis, preceding, accompanying, and following a Special Session of the Legislature and leading to rapid reduction in State relief personnel, necessitated abandonment of the plan of the State Emergency Relief Administration to use such a committee for its own original purpose. The Special Committee was not appointed until September, 1936, holding its first meeting on September 30, and confined its attention thereafter to a study and report upon the personnel problem for the guidance of the Pennsylvania Committee on Public Assistance and Relief in its formulation of a permanent program of public assistance for Pennsylvania.

The Special Committee had the benefit of the continuous secretarial and research service of one of its members, William C. Beyer, Director of the Bureau of Municipal Research of Philadelphia, a recognized authority in the field of public personnel administration, who was a member of the staff of the Pennsylvania Committee on a part-time basis, from October 1, 1936, to March 31, 1937. Preliminary reports of the Special Committee were dis-

* First General Report, page 64.

cussed by the general Committee, in the preparation of its First General Report, submitted to Governor Earle on December 15, 1936. Section Seven of that report** presented and briefly supported the following recommendation:

> "That all officers and employees in the State Department of Assistance other than those in policy-determining positions, and all officers and employees under all County Boards of Assistance, be placed under the merit system."

The recommendations of the Special Advisory Committee on the Merit System were submitted on January 26, 1937, in the form of a tentative draft of legislation, to be incorporated in the general legislation to be recommended by the Pennsylvania Committee. These recommendations, though largely accepted in principle by the Pennsylvania Committee, were modified in a number of important details and greatly abbreviated in form, in the legislation finally approved by the general Committee. The principal modification approved by the general Committee was the elimination of the requirement that appointments should be made in each case from among the three persons having the highest rating in competitive examinations.

The very great value of the work of the Special Advisory Committee and its staff is gratefully acknowledged by the Pennsylvania Committee on Public Assistance and Relief, which is happy to present herewith a detailed report of the facts and conclusions resulting from this study. Special acknowledgment is also due to the executives and staff members of the State Emergency Relief Board, the State Department of Welfare, and the State Budget Office, for their cordial and indispensable cooperation. The public personnel authorities of many other states have also been exceedingly generous in making available for the Committee's use much valuable material describing current personnel policies and interpreting their experience with them.

HERBERT F. GOODRICH

** First General Report, pages 81-82

## SECTION ONE

## SCOPE OF THE PROBLEM

This report deals with the problems of personnel administration in the proposed Department of Public Assistance and the local boards of assistance under its supervision. As this department and the new local boards will perform functions now performed by a number of existing State departments and local governmental agencies, some idea of the magnitude and character of the personnel problems in the new department may be gained from a brief survey of the separate units to be merged. Only the number of persons employed in these units, the annual rate of expenditure for their salaries, and the functional and vocational groups to which they belong need be noted in this survey.

### Number and Salaries

In the following tabulation are shown, for given dates, the number of persons employed in each of the units to be merged and the annual rate of expenditure for their salaries.

| Units to be merged | Number of employes | Annual salaries at present rate | Date of information |
|---|---|---|---|
| Total all units | 5,161 | $6,275,782 | |
| State Emergency Relief Board and local boards | 3,723 | 4,627,902 | February 28, 1937 |
| Bureau of Assistance, Department of Welfare | 97 | 154,548 | February 24, 1937 |
| County Boards of Mothers' Assistance * | 1,141 | 1,333,332 | February 28, 1937 |
| Outdoor relief work of Poor Boards (estimated) | 200 | 160,000 | 1937 |

* Administering, also, old age assistance and assistance to the blind.

For the number of employes engaged in out-door relief work under the local poor boards only an estimate could be given. It is not possible to ascertain this number accurately from the reports of these boards to the Department of Welfare. The special study of poor relief administration made by that department in 1934 ** revealed that in 1933 there were 569 paid workers in 300 of the 425 poor districts of the State. *** This number, while representing only part of the districts, included almshouse employes as well as outdoor relief workers. Only 98, according to the department's study, were investigators. Probably the number has somewhat increased since that time. The estimate of 200 given in the preceding tabulation may be

** Poor Relief Administration in Pennsylvania, Bulletin Number 61, State Department of Welfare, Harrisburg, Pa.

*** Employes of the Departments of Welfare of Philadelphia and Pittsburgh are not included in this figure.

regarded as a rough approximation. It has been assumed in this tabulation that these workers average $800 a year in salary.

We have, then, in all the units and functions that would be transferred to the new department and the new local boards, about 5,160 paid workers and a yearly payroll expense of about $6,276,000.

## Functions and Vocations

How are these workers distributed functionally and vocationally? In the largest unit to be transferred, the State Emergency Relief Board, the 3,723 employes on the payroll on February 28, 1937, were distributed as follows:

| Departmental Units | | Number of Employes |
|---|---|---|
| Total all units | | 3,723 |
| State Headquarters Office, Total | | 349 |
| General Division | 141 | |
| Executive Director | 1 | |
| Assistant Executive Director | 1 | |
| Assistant to the Executive Director | 1 | |
| Unit and Department Heads | 5 | |
| Assistant Unit Heads | 1 | |
| Staff Assistants | 1 | |
| Other Supervisory Employees | 9 | |
| Secretaries, Stenographers, Typists | 21 | |
| Statisticians | 15 | |
| Clerical Staff | 56 | |
| Janitors, Watchmen, Cleaners | 16 | |
| Balance of General Division Staff | 14 | |
| Relief Division | 27 | |
| State Supervisor and Assistant Director of Relief Division | 1 | |
| Assistant State Supervisor | 1 | |
| Consultant on Community Contacts | 1 | |
| Field Representatives | 7 | |
| Staff Assistants | 3 | |
| Other Supervisory Employees | 4 | |
| Secretaries, Stenographers, Typists | 6 | |
| Clerical Staff | 4 | |
| Financial Division | 181 | |
| State Comptroller--Chief Disbursing Officer | 1 | |
| Assistant State Comptroller | 1 | |
| Deputy Chief Disbursing Officer | 1 | |
| Department Heads | 5 | |
| Staff Assistants | 1 | |
| Other Supervisory Employees | 11 | |

| Financial Division (continued) | Number of Employees | |
|---|---|---|
| Accountants, Auditors, Bookkeepers | 81 | |
| Secretaries, Stenographers, Typists | 18 | |
| Clerical Staff | 62 | |
| Local Relief and Financial Divisions | | 3,374 |
| Administrative Service | 112 | |
| Acting Executive Directors | 4 | |
| Assistant Comptrollers | 7 | |
| Assistant County or Area Supervisors | 1 | |
| Assistant Executive Directors | 5 | |
| Comptrollers | 3 | |
| Comptroller-Assistant Disbursing Officer and Special Accounting Representative | 1 | |
| County/Area Supervisors | 18 | |
| Head, Accounting Department | 2 | |
| Head, Accounting-Assistant Disbursing Officer | 2 | |
| Head, Accounting and Disbursing | 1 | |
| Head, Check Writing | 1 | |
| Head, Check Writing and Posting | 2 | |
| Head, Investigation | 2 | |
| Head, Master Files | 4 | |
| Head, Rent Department--Industrial Contact Man | 1 | |
| Local Executive Directors | 43 | |
| Staff Assistant for Research | 1 | |
| Staff Assistants | 14 | |
| Supervisory Service | 105 | |
| Assistant Disbursing Officers | 3 | |
| Assistant Supervisor of CERB Personnel | 1 | |
| Clerical Supervisors A | 8 | |
| Clerical Supervisors B | 17 | |
| Chief Telephone Operator | 1 | |
| Community Contact Agent | 1 | |
| Contact Man | 1 | |
| District Office Chief Clerks | 47 | |
| Industrial Contact Man | 13 | |
| Junior Staff Assistant | 1 | |
| Supervisor, Building Service | 2 | |
| Supervisor, Building Service & Property Records | 5 | |
| Supervisor, CCC Enrollment-Correspondence | 1 | |
| Supervisor, CCC Enrollment-Supply Clerk | 1 | |
| Supervisor, Information & Clearance | 1 | |
| Supervisor, Supplies | 2 | |
| Professional, Technical & Investigational Service | 38 | |
| Assistant Industrial Contact Man | 2 | |
| Assistant Insurance Adjuster | 1 | |
| Case Workers | 3 | |
| Claim Investigators | 5 | |
| Industrial Contact Visitors | 3 | |
| Insurance Adjusters | 2 | |

| Professional, Technical & Investigational Service (continued) | Number of Employees |
|---|---|
| Junior Statisticians | 4 |
| Legal Advisers | 1 |
| Restitution Agents | 7 |
| Restitution Agent--Industrial Contact Man | 1 |
| Restitution Interviewers | 4 |
| Statisticians | 5 |
| **Social Service** | 1,686 |
| District Supervisors | 41 |
| Interviewers | 103 |
| Interviewer-Information Clerks | 2 |
| Interviewer-Receptionist | 1 |
| Interviewer-Visitors | 3 |
| Junior Visitors | 163 |
| Social Service Adjusters | 4 |
| Student Visitors | 20 |
| Supervisors (Senior/Junior) | 131 |
| Visitors | 1,217 |
| Visitor-Junior Staff Assistant | 1 |
| **Accounting and Auditing Service** | 25 |
| Accountants A | 2 |
| Accountants B | 8 |
| Accountant B-Assistant Disbursing Officer | 1 |
| Accountant B-Junior Assistant Disbursing Officer | 1 |
| Accountant B-Bookkeepers | 2 |
| Assistant Disbursing Officer-Clerical Supervisor A | 1 |
| Auditors A | 4 |
| Auditors B | 3 |
| Bookkeepers | 3 |
| **Typing, Stenographic, Secretarial Service** | 333 |
| Aide to Supervisor | 1 |
| Check Typists | 9 |
| Dictaphone Operators | 12 |
| Relief Authorization Typists | 22 |
| Secretaries | 36 |
| Stenographers A | 71 |
| Stenographers B | 119 |
| Typists A | 44 |
| Typists B | 19 |
| **Public Information Service** | 29 |
| Information Clerks | 25 |
| Receptionists | 4 |
| **General Clerical and Records Service** | 592 |
| Addressograph Clerks | 10 |
| Accounting Clerk | 1 |
| Assigners | 9 |
| Budget Clerks | 35 |

| General Clerical and Records Service (continued) | Number of Employees |
|---|---|
| Check Clerks | 5 |
| Clerical Adjusters | 25 |
| Clerks A | 98 |
| Clerks B | 112 |
| Expeditors | 17 |
| File Clerks A | 99 |
| File Clerks B | 46 |
| Income Record Clerks | 13 |
| Mail Clerks | 3 |
| Posting Clerks | 31 |
| Relief Telephone Clerks | 10 |
| Statistical Clerks A | 2 |
| Statistical Clerks B | 3 |
| Telephone Clerks | 27 |
| Typist Clerks | 43 |
| Verification Clerks | 3 |
| **General Clerical and Records Service (Dual Classifications)** | **261** |
| Agency Registration Clerk--Income Record Clerk | 1 |
| Assigner--Expeditors | 1 |
| Budget Clerk--Clerk A | 2 |
| Budget Clerk--Clerk B | 1 |
| Budget Clerk--File Clerk A | 1 |
| Budget Clerk--File Clerk B | 1 |
| Budget Clerk--Information Clerk | 2 |
| Budget Clerk--Relief Authorization Typist | 3 |
| Budget Clerk--Stenographer B | 2 |
| Budget Clerk--Typist A | 2 |
| Calculator A--Statistical Clerk | 2 |
| Calculator B--Clerical Adjuster | 1 |
| Clerical Adjuster--Expeditor | 1 |
| Clerical Adjuster--Information Clerk | 1 |
| Clerical Adjuster--Typist A | 1 |
| Clerk A--Check Clerk | 1 |
| Clerk A--File Clerk A | 47 |
| Clerk A--File Clerk B | 10 |
| Clerk A--Income Record Clerk | 2 |
| Clerk A--Information Clerk | 2 |
| Clerk A--Relief Authorization Typist | 35 |
| Clerk A--Stenographer A | 1 |
| Clerk A--Stenographer B | 8 |
| Clerk A--Supply Clerk | 1 |
| Clerk A--Telephone Clerk | 4 |
| Clerk A--Telephone Operator | 1 |
| Clerk A--Typist A | 29 |
| Clerk A--Typist B | 19 |
| Clerk B--File Clerk A | 1 |
| Clerk B--Income Record Clerk | 1 |
| Clerk B--Posting Clerk | 10 |
| Clerk B--Telephone Clerk | 1 |
| Clerk B--Typist A | 4 |
| Clerk B--Typist B | 13 |
| Expeditor--Verification Clerk | 1 |
| File Clerk A--Messenger | 1 |
| File Clerk A--Stenographer B | 1 |
| File Clerk A--Typist A | 2 |
| File Clerk A--Typist B | 3 |

| General Clerical and Records Service (continued) (Dual Classifications) | Number of Employees |
|---|---|
| File Clerk B--Relief Authorization Typist | 1 |
| File Clerk B--Stenographer B | 2 |
| File Clerk B--Telephone Operator | 1 |
| File Clerk B--Typist A | 1 |
| File Clerk B--Typist B | 2 |
| File Clerk B--Verification Clerk | 1 |
| Income Record Clerk--Stenographer B | 1 |
| Income Record Clerk--Typist A | 9 |
| Income Record Clerk--Typist B | 2 |
| Income Record Clerk--Typist Clerk | 1 |
| Information Clerk--Stenographer B | 3 |
| Information Clerk--Telephone Operator | 1 |
| Information Clerk--Typist A | 1 |
| Relief Authorization Typist--Stenographer B | 1 |
| Relief Authorization Typist--Typist A | 1 |
| Statistical Clerk A--Stenographer A | 1 |
| Statistical Clerk A--Stenographer B | 2 |
| Stenographer A--Telephone Operator | 1 |
| Stenographer B--Relief Authorization Typist | 2 |
| Stenographer B--Telephone Operator | 2 |
| Stenographer B--Usher | 1 |
| Telephone Operator--Typist A | 1 |
| Telephone Operator--Typist B | 2 |
| Typist B--Verification Clerk | 1 |
| **Office Applicance Operating Service** | 56 |
| Addressograph Operators | 3 |
| Addressograph Operator - Addressograph Clerk | 1 |
| Addressograph Operator - Clerk A | 1 |
| Calculator B | 13 |
| Graphotype Operator | 6 |
| Mimeograph Operator | 1 |
| Mimeograph Operator - Messenger | 1 |
| Telephone Operators | 30 |
| **Steward, Messenger and Janitorial Service** | 137 |
| Building Superintendent | 6 |
| Cleaners | 21 |
| Firemen | 2 |
| General Repairmen | 3 |
| Industrial Contact--Messenger | 2 |
| Janitor--Clerk B | 1 |
| Janitor | 54 |
| Janitor--Fireman | 2 |
| Janitor--General Repairman | 2 |
| Janitor--Messenger | 2 |
| Janitor--Watchman | 1 |
| Messengers | 10 |
| Supply Clerk | 2 |
| Truck Driver | 1 |
| Ushers | 22 |
| Watchman | 6 |

The 97 employees who, on February 24, 1937, were in the Bureau of Assistance of the Department of Welfare, were distributed, by functional groups, as follows:

| | Number of Employees | |
|---|---|---|
| Total | | 97 |
| Administrative and supervisory officials | 12 | |
| Accounting employees | 4 | |
| Statisticians | 3 | |
| Clerical and stenographic employees | 43 | |
| Case readers and case correspondents | 20 | |
| Field representatives | 14 | |
| Supervising Opthalmologist | 1 | |

While the Committee is unable to present an occupational analysis of the 1,141 paid workers on the payrolls of the County Boards of Mothers' Assistance in February, 1937, it can show a broad vocational grouping of these workers as follows:

| | Number of Employees | |
|---|---|---|
| Total | | 1,141 |
| Executive secretaries | 68 | |
| Supervisors | 57 | |
| Visitors | 666 | |
| Clerical workers | 350 | |

No distribution can be given for the employees engaged in outdoor relief work under the poor boards. A majority, doubtless, are clerical workers and field investigators.

## SECTION TWO

## PRESENT PERSONNEL METHODS AND POLICIES

An examination of present methods and policies of personnel administration in the units that are to be merged in the proposed Department of Public Assistance seems a prerequisite to the intelligent formulation of a program of personnel administration for the new department. This section is accordingly devoted to a brief inquiry into those methods and policies. Particular attention will be given to the following points: (1) the administrative machinery through which personnel affairs are controlled, (2) selection and appointment, (3) compensation, (4) working conditions, (5) transfers and promotions, (6) layoffs, (7) demotions and removals, (8) limitation of political activity and political assessments.

In this examination it will be necessary to deal separately with the Bureau of Assistance of the Department of Welfare, the County Mothers' Assistance Boards, the State Emergency Relief Board, and the poor boards.

### Bureau of Assistance, Department of Welfare

While concern is primarily with the Bureau of Assistance of the Department of Welfare, an examination of the personnel methods and policies in effect in this unit leads inevitably into an examination of the personnel methods and policies that obtain in the Department of Welfare as a whole and other departments of the State government.

#### Administrative Machinery

In the State offices of the Department of Welfare, as in most of the other departments at Harrisburg, personnel affairs are controlled to a considerable extent by the Governor and the Executive Board. This Board consists of the Governor and six other heads of administrative departments designated by the Governor. Four members of the Board constitute a quorum. Under the Board are two bureaus that perform personnel functions: The Budget Bureau and the Personnel Bureau.

The Budget Bureau. Under Section 211 of the Administrative Code, the Governor is required to appoint a budget secretary to serve at the Governor's pleasure. This official presides over the Budget Bureau which, among other functions, sees that the rates paid to officers and employes in the departments under the Executive Board conform to the standards fixed by the Board. The Budget Bureau has assisted also in preparing the classification of positions and the standardization of pay now in effect in a large part of the State service.

The Personnel Bureau. While the Administrative Code does not specifically mention either the personnel secretary or the Personnel Bureau, under Section 211 the Governor has power to appoint various kinds of aides, and, in the exercise of that power, he appoints a personnel secretary who presides over the Personnel Bureau. This Bureau serves primarily as the agent of the Governor and the Executive Board in enforcing the personnel provisions of the Administrative Code relating to the qualifications of employes.

#### Selection and Appointment

Both the Executive Board and the head of the department participate in the selection and appointment of employes in the State offices under the Board's control.

Appointing power. The power to appoint is lodged by Section 214 of the Administrative Code in the head of the department. This Section reads in part as follows:

> "The heads of the several administrative departments, except the Auditor General and State Treasurer, and the independent administrative boards and commissions, shall appoint and fix the compensation of such directors, superintendents, bureau or division chiefs, assistant directors, assistant superintendents, assistant chiefs, experts, scientists, engineers, surveyors, draftsmen, accountants, secretaries, auditors, inspectors, examiners, statisticians, marshals, clerks, stenographers, bookkeepers, messengers, and other assistants and employes, as may be required for the proper conduct of the work of their respective departments, boards, or commissions. Except as otherwise provided in this act, the heads of the respective administrative departments shall appoint and fix the compensation of such clerks, stenographers, and other assistants, as may be required for the proper conduct of the work of any departmental administrative bodies, boards, commissions, or officers, and of any advisory boards or commissions established in their respective departments."

The power of appointment herein conferred, however, is modified by two other Sections of the Code, 217 and 709. Section 217 provides that:

> "All deputies, directors, superintendents, and Bureau or division chiefs, and other employes, shall be persons especially qualified for their positions by training and experience in the particular kind of work which their official duties will require them to perform."

In other words, the head of the department shall appoint only persons who are qualified for the positions they are to fill.

Section 709 provides in part as follows:

> "The Executive Board shall have the power:
> (a) To standardize the qualifications for employment, and all titles, salaries, and wages, of persons employed by the administrative departments, boards, and commissions, except the Department of the Auditor General and the Treasury Department. In establishing such standards the board may:
> (1) Take into consideration the location of the work and the conditions under which the service is rendered.
> (2) Establish different standards for different kinds, grades and classes of similar work or service...."

Under this grant of power, the Executive Board has classified departmental positions and has prescribed for each class (1) minimum qualifications of education, training, and experience, and (2) standard personal qualifications. To illustrate: The chief of the Bureau of Assistance in the Department of Welfare has been classified in grade 19 of service 21 of the Board's "Classification and Compensation System" which became effective on September 1, 1933. For that grade the Board has prescribed the following standard qualifications:

Minimum Qualifications

Education, Training, and Experience

Graduation from an accredited high school or equivalent.

a. Scientific or technical
   (1) Graduation with a degree from a college or university of recognized standing or equivalent.
   (2) Four years' experience in specialized field.

b. Professional
   (1) Graduation with a degree from a college or university of recognized standing.
   (2) Doctor's degree in field or branch of science designated.
   (3) Two years' professional experience.
   (4) State licensure or registration.

Standard Personal Qualifications

| | |
|---|---|
| Thoroughness | Tact |
| Resourcefulness | Industry |
| Analytical ability | Initiative |
| Ability to meet public | Good judgment |

Ability to cooperate with others

Similar standards have been set up for all the other classes and grades of positions in the State offices under the control of the Governor and the Executive Board. The head of the department is required, in exercising his power of appointment, to appoint only persons who possess the standard qualifications thus prescribed.

Procedure. In practice, the Personnel Bureau plays an important part in the process of selection and appointment. Generally speaking, any person who desires to obtain employment in the State offices of the Department of Welfare must file an application with the Personnel Bureau. The required application form asks him to give, among other things, the following information: his address; voting residence; date of birth; place of birth; age; height; weight; nationality; marital status; number of dependents; if married, whether husband or wife is employed and, if so, where; how many other members of his family are employed and where; the kind of work desired; the location desired; a record of his training; and a record of his employment from the time he was first employed. It is also noteworthy that the application form provides a place not only for the signature of the applicant but for that of a sponsor. Under long established practice this has come to mean a political sponsor. This application is placed in the files of the Personnel Bureau. No tests are given by the Personnel Bureau to determine whether the applicant possesses the qualifications necessary for the kind of work which he desires.

When a department needs additional workers in its State offices, it calls upon the Personnel Bureau for available persons. The personnel secretary thereupon consults his files and selects therefrom the applications of persons who seem to possess the necessary qualifications, and, with the approval of the Governor, sends them to the department. Usually only one applicant is submitted for a single vacancy. The department head then sends for the applicant whose name and application have been submitted to him and interviews him, or has one of his aides interview him, depending on the importance of the position to be filled. If the vacancy to be filled is in one

of the bureaus, the head of the bureau is afforded an opportunity to interview the applicant. Occasionally the department communicates with the applicant's references before deciding whether to appoint him. For stenographic and bookkeeping positions, moreover, the applicant may be given an informal test. If, after these interviews, inquiries, and tests, an applicant seems to be qualified for the position, the head of the department appoints him. Such appointment, however, does not become official until it has been approved by the personnel secretary, the budget secretary, and the Governor. If the applicant does not appear qualified, the department so advises the Personnel Bureau. The Personnel Bureau thereupon submits additional applicants until someone is supplied who proves satisfactory to the department. Occasionally, for highly specialized positions, the Personnel Bureau is unable to supply a qualified applicant and authorizes the department head to appoint someone of his own choice who has not filed an application with the Personnel Bureau.

As a rule, new employes are immediately given permanent appointments and are not required to serve for a period of time as probationers. Only in exceptional instances are they started with a probationery appointment.

Compensation

Section 214 of the Administrative Code, which has already been quoted in part, gives department heads power to fix the compensation of employes under their jurisdiction, but qualifies that power as follows:

> "The number and compensation of all employes appointed under this section shall be subject to approval by the Governor, and, after the Executive Board shall have fixed the standard compensation for any kind, grade, or class of service or employment, the compensation of all persons in that kind, grade, or class, appointed hereunder, shall be fixed in accordance with such standard."

It will be noted that the compensation of employes not only is subject to the approval of the Governor, but is subject, also, to standards of compensation fixed by the Executive Board. The power and duty to establish such standards is specifically conferred upon the Executive Board in Section 709, previously quoted, which also authorizes the Board to standardize qualifications for employment.

The Compensation Plan. Under this grant of power, the Executive Board has established a compensation plan. This plan, which forms an integral part of the Board's "Classification and Compensation System" already referred to, prescribes standard minimum, maximum, and intermediate rates of pay for all grades of positions in the State offices of the Department of Welfare as well as for positions in other departments. The chart on the next page shows the standard rates for the fifteen grades of positions into which the State service is divided horizontally.

SCHEDULE OF GRADUATED INCREASES
IN COMPENSATION *

| Grade | Minimum | Salaries for Merit after: First year | Second year | Third year | Fourth year | Maximum | Total increase |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 25 | $9,000 | -- | -- | -- | -- | $12,000 | $3,000 |
| 24 | 7,500 | -- | -- | -- | -- | 9,000 | 1,500 |
| 23 | 6,000 | -- | $6,500 | $7,000 | $7,500 | 7,500 | 1,500 |
| 22 | 5,000 | $5,250 | 5,500 | 5,750 | 6,000 | 6,000 | 1,000 |
| 21 | 4,200 | 4,400 | 4,600 | 4,800 | 5,000 | 5,000 | 800 |
| 20 | 3,600 | 3,750 | 3,900 | 4,050 | 4,200 | 4,200 | 600 |
| 19 | 3,000 | 3,150 | 3,300 | 3,450 | 3,600 | 3,600 | 600 |
| 18 | 2,400 | 2,550 | 2,700 | 2,850 | 3,000 | 3,000 | 600 |
| 17 | 2,100 | 2,175 | 2,250 | 2,325 | 2,400 | 2,400 | 300 |
| 16 | 1,860 | 1,920 | 1,980 | 2,040 | 2,100 | 2,100 | 240 |
| 15 | 1,620 | 1,680 | 1,740 | 1,800 | 1,860 | 1,860 | 240 |
| 14 | 1,380 | 1,440 | 1,500 | 1,560 | 1,620 | 1,620 | 240 |
| 13 | 1,140 | 1,200 | 1,260 | 1,320 | 1,380 | 1,380 | 240 |
| 12 | 1,020 | 1,080 | 1,140 | 1,140 | 1,140 | 1,140 | 120 |
| 11 | 900 | 900 | 1,020 | 1,020 | 1,020 | 1,020 | 120 |

* Quoted from "Classification and Compensation System of Personnel Service, Effective September 1, 1933," Page 11.

The application of these rates to employes is governed by rules of the Executive Board. A new appointee must begin at the minimum rate for his grade, but in exceptional cases the Governor may approve an initial compensation in excess of the minimum rate. "Increases in pay within grades," so the rules provide, "will be approved by the department head only for competent and faithful employes who have rendered superior service either in speed, accuracy, quality, quantity, reliability, fidelity, or character of their work, upon the recommendation of the responsible bureau, division, or section chief, and in accordance with the chart of Graduated Increases in Compensation. Length of service without improvement will not justify increase in pay." The rules provide also that "increases in salaries within grades, when approved by the Governor, may be paid only on the basis of meritorious service. Increases in pay within grades will be considered February 1, May 1, August 1, November 1, of each year. However, a salary increase for any employe will not be approved oftener than once a year, and no salary shall be paid in excess of the maximum specified for the grade in which the employe is classified."

For illustration, a "senior clerk" is classified in grade 12. He would, therefore, receive upon appointment the minimum rate for the grade, $1,020 a year. He could look forward to advances, first to $1,080 a year, and then to $1,140 a year, the maximum for the grade. Both the initial rate and the subsequent increases, however, would have to be approved by the Budget Secretary and the Governor before they would become effective.

Extra compensation. Section 215 of the Administrative Code regulates the payment of extra compensation as follows:

> "No employe in any administrative department, independent administrative board or commission, or departmental administrative board or commission employed at a fixed compensation, shall be paid for any extra services, unless expressly authorized by the Executive Board prior to the rendering of such services."

In its rules, the Executive Board amplifies this provision by stating that "when a person is employed at a fixed compensation and is authorized to receive extra compensation for doing work in addition to his regular duties, such work shall be performed outside of the regular office hours during which such person is employed in the first instance."

## Working Conditions

Hours of work and leaves of absence with pay are governed by Section 222 of the Administrative Code. This section reads as follows:

> "Each employe of an administrative department, of an independent administrative board or commission, or of a departmental administrative board or commission, if employed for continuous service, shall work during such hours as the head of the department or the board or commission shall require but not less than thirty-eight hours per week. Such employe shall be entitled, during each calendar year, to fifteen days' leave of absence, with full pay, and, in special and meritorious cases where to limit the annual leave to fifteen days in any one calendar year would work peculiar hardships, the extent of such leave with pay may, in the discretion of the head of the department or of the board or commission, be extended, but any such extension shall not be for more than fifteen days, except with the approval of the Executive Board, in the case of employes of departments or of

independent administrative boards or commissions, and, in the case of employes of departmental administrative boards or commissions, of the departments with which such boards or commissions are respectively connected. This section shall be construed to mean that the pay of such employe shall cease upon the expiration of the granted leave, regardless of his or her continuation thereafter upon the rolls of the department, board or commission. The annual leave of absence with pay shall be exclusive of Sundays and legal holidays."

Transfers and Promotions

While transfers and promotions are not mentioned in the Administrative Code, they are regulated by a section of the rules of the Executive Board governing the application of the standard qualifications and standard salaries. This section reads as follows:

"Vacancy in any position in state employment will be filled, when practical, by transfer or promotion of a worthy and competent employe, from a lower grade.

"An employe promoted to a position in a higher grade shall receive no more than the minimum salary of the grade to which promoted.

"An employe transferred to a lower grade shall receive a salary not higher than the salary payable in accordance with the 'schedule of graduated increases in compensation' as though the entire service had been rendered in the lower grade.

"Maximum ability in a specific position should be developed within the service period specified for each kind of work and promotion beyond the highest salary rate for any grade may be achieved only by transfer to a position of a higher grade."

In both transfers and promotions, the initiative is usually taken by the department, but no transfer or promotion can become effective until it has been approved by the personnel secretary, the budget secretary, and the Governor. Employes are selected and approved for promotion without the guidance of specific records showing their efficiency in the positions in which they have been serving and without formal tests of their capacity for the higher positions which they are to fill.

Lay-offs

Neither the Administrative Code nor the rules of the Executive Board specifically mention lay-offs, that is, temporary separations from the service because of lack of work or lack of funds. The rules, however, do provide for the reporting of all separations to the Executive Board. Like all other changes in the service, separations have to be approved by the personnel secretary, the budget secretary, and the Governor. There is no formal procedure for the selection of the employes to be laid off when a reduction in force has to be made.

Demotions and Removals

The power to demote and remove is in the head of the department, though it is qualified in practice by the requirement that the personnel

secretary, the budget secretary, and the Governor must approve all demotions and removals. Frequently, moreover, the initiative in removals is taken by the Personnel Bureau, which sends instructions to the head of the department. This happens with special frequency after changes in administration. It is not necessary under existing law that a written statement of the reasons for demotion or removal be given to the employe, nor has the employe any right of appeal from the decision of the department head.

That removals are too numerous in State offices has long been recognized. In 1933 the Joint Legislative Committee on State Finances reported as follows: "The operation of the present system is fundamentally faulty because of the turnover of personnel with each change of administration. At the end of every administration--regardless of who wins the election--there is a great exodus from the Capitol, and the places of those who leave are taken by faithful party workers who helped secure the election of the new Governor. The State service suffers, and the taxpayer pays while the new recruit to the service learns to perform his job with a reasonable degree of efficiency." *

A high turnover of personnel has taken place in the Department of Welfare as well as in other departments. The number of persons removed from the service in the State offices of that Department was 46 in 1935, and 32 in 1936. As the average number of persons on the payroll in those offices was 93 in 1935 and 120 in 1936, the annual turnover rate due to removals alone was 46.4 per cent in 1935, and 26.6 per cent in 1936.

In any organization, some of the forced separations take the form of resignations and are so recorded. Were it possible to go behind the records, it doubtless would be found that a portion of the separations listed as resignations were in fact removals. While it is not possible to go behind the records, it may at least be noted whether resignations were many or few.

For so small a working force as that of the State offices of the Department of Welfare, the resignations were many. In 1935, there were 22 resignations; in 1936, there were 24. If resignations are added to removals, we have a joint annual separation rate of 73.1 per cent in 1935 and 46.6 per cent in 1936. In a normally stable service of salaried workers in public employment, the total annual separation rate is not over 10 per cent and is often as low as 6 per cent. The removal rate alone is considerably lower. Obviously, this branch of the departmental service has not been normally stable.

Political Activity and Assessments

Employes in the Department of Welfare are not legally restrained from engaging in political activity nor are they legally protected from political assessments. This situation is not peculiar to the Department of Welfare, but obtains also in most of the other departments of the State government.

* Report of Joint Legislative Committee on Finances on the Organization and Administration of the Government of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Harrisburg, 1934, Page 615.

## Mothers' Assistance Boards

Under the Act of July 10, 1919, and its later amendments, the Governor is required to appoint in each county "a board of trustees, composed of seven women, residents of the county, to be called the Board of Trustees of the Mothers' Assistance Fund." The members of this board hold office for six-year terms which overlap so that they expire at intervals of two years. In any six-year period, there occur two expirations of two terms each and one expiration of three terms. The Governor may remove a member at any time by virtue of his power under Article VI, Section 4 of the state constitution, which reads in part as follows:

> "Appointed officers, other than judges of the courts of record, and the Superintendent of Public Instruction, may be removed at the pleasure of the power by which they shall have been appointed."

These boards, which at first administered only assistance to mothers, but within the last three years have been required to administer, also, pensions for the blind and assistance to the aged, have power to appoint such investigators and other employes as may be needed for the work to be done, and to provide for the payment of salaries and incidental expenses within certain limits. In the exercise of these and other powers, however, the county boards are subject to the general supervision of the Department of Welfare. To what degree and in what manner the department controls the personnel affairs of the county boards will appear in the examination of the procedure followed in the various employment processes.

### Administrative Machinery

Such control as the Department of Welfare wields over the personnel affairs of the county boards, is exerted through its Bureau of Assistance. This Bureau is in charge of a chief who is appointed by the Secretary of Welfare and is removable by him. No control is exercised over the personnel affairs of the county boards by the State Executive Board.

### Selection and Appointment

The county boards have had thus far considerable freedom in the selection and appointment of employes. In the first place, they have done the recruiting themselves. Persons seeking employment under a county board have applied directly to the board, and not to a state office. In the second place, the county boards have made their own selections from those who applied for positions; they have not been required to appoint from lists of eligibles established by any state department or agency.

To some extent, however, appointments under the county boards have been controlled by the Department of Welfare, through the Bureau of Assistance. No one may be appointed under a county board unless he has been approved by the Bureau of Assistance and the Secretary of Welfare.

Obviously, to exercise this power in an orderly and uniform manner, the Bureau needs standard qualifications for the various classes of positions to be filled. Such standard qualifications have been established for four classes: executive secretaries, supervisors, visitors, and junior visitors.

For executive secretary, the following qualifications have been prescribed:

Minimum Age 25
Completion of two years of college work
or its equivalent*

plus

Five years paid progressive experience as a visitor or supervisor with a social agency recognized by the Bureau of Assistance, of which one year is to be successful supervisory experience. Candidate should have demonstrated administrative ability.

or

Completion of three years of college work
or its equivalent*

plus

Four years paid progressive experience as a visitor or supervisor with a social agency recognized by the Bureau of Assistance, of which one year is to be successful supervisory experience. Candidate should have demonstrated administrative ability.

or

Completion of four years of college work
or its equivalent*

plus

Three years paid progressive experience as a visitor or supervisor with a social agency recognized by the Bureau of Assistance, of which one year is to be successful supervisory experience. Candidate should have demonstrated administrative ability.

For supervisor, the qualifications prescribed have been as follows:

Minimum Age 24
Completion of two years of college work
or its equivalent*

plus

Five years paid progressive experience as a visitor with a social agency recognized by the Bureau of Assistance.

* Graduation from a school of nursing will be considered equivalent to one year of college. Certain other special training, such as kindergarten school will be evaluated on an individual basis in relation to college credit generally allowed for this training. The Department of Public Instruction will be used as consultant in such evaluation.

or

Completion of three years of college work or its equivalent*

plus

Four years paid progressive experience as a visitor with a social agency recognized by the Bureau of Assistance.

or

Graduation from college.

plus

Three years paid progressive experience as a visitor with a social agency recognized by the Bureau of Assistance.

For visitor, the Bureau of Assistance has prescribed the following qualifications:

Age 21 - 45
A junior visitor is eligible for classification as visitor at the completion of six months satisfactory service, provided the county submits to personnel consultant the following:

(a) The original application blank with request for reclassification.
(b) A written evaluation of the visitor's work.

A staff member may be classified as a visitor at time of employment if the county makes this request in writing and the application indicates that he meets qualifications set for junior visitor.

Has in addition to requirements for junior visitor at least one year paid progressive experience as a visitor with a social agency recognized by the Bureau of Assistance. A written statement must be submitted verifying this employment and the visitor's success in it.

* Graduation from a school of nursing will be considered equivalent to one year of college. Certain other special training, such as kindergarten school will be evaluated on an individual basis in relation to college credit generally allowed for this training. The Department of Public Instruction will be used as consultant in such evaluation.

For junior visitor, the following qualifications have been prescribed:

> Age 21 - 45
> Graduation from high school and completion of at least two years of college work or its equivalent*
>
> plus
> Graduation from college.
>
> or
>
> One year of paid progressive experience as a visitor with a social agency approved by the Bureau of Assistance.
>
> or
>
> Two years successful experience in a related field which involves working with people individually, such as public health nursing, settlement work, teaching, etc.

* Graduation from a school of nursing will be considered equivalent to one year of college. Certain other special training, such as kindergarten school will be evaluated on an individual basis in relation to college credit generally allowed for this training. The Department of Public Instruction will be used as consultant in such evaluation.

In determining whether nominees possessed the prescribed qualifications the Bureau of Assistance has had for examination with each nomination, the application of the nominee, letters of reference obtained by the county board, and comments on the nominee by the officials of the county board. It has not been possible to make a survey of the practices of all of the 67 county boards, but these general observations may be made: Neither the law nor the rules of the department require the county boards to give formal examinations to applicants for positions. Each county board has been free to employ its own methods of ascertaining the qualifications of those who sought employment in its organization. According to the officials of the Bureau of Assistance, the prevailing practice has been to examine the application submitted on a prescribed form, to address inquiries to the references given in the application, and to accord the applicant an interview. The interview might be given by the executive secretary, by a member of the board, or by some one designated by the executive secretary.

Compensation

In fixing rates of pay of their employes, as in making appointments, the county boards have had considerable freedom. Under the various laws imposing duties upon them, the boards have been required to keep administrative expenses, which include expenses for salaries, within certain limits, but have had freedom of action within those limits. The mothers' assistance law (Act of July 10, 1919) and its amendments limited the annual administrative expenses in each county to 10 per cent of the annual appropriation for the county; the old age assistance law (Act of June 25, 1936) limited the additional expenses that might be incurred for administration to 6 per cent of the allocation to the county for old age assistance; and the blind

pension law (Act of July 9, 1935) limited the additional administrative expenses to 6 per cent of the allocation to the county for pensions for the blind. As there are administrative expenses for items other than salaries, the amount that a county board might spend for salaries was less than the total amount allowable for all administrative purposes. So long as a county board did not overstep these limits, it could employ as many assistants as it deemed necessary and pay them any salaries it thought proper.

Thus far, the Bureau of Assistance has not exercised direct control over rates of pay in the counties. It has, however, made suggestions for the guidance of the county boards. In September, 1936, it sent to them tentative salary schedules for executive directors, assistant directors and case supervisors, senior visitors, junior visitors, stenographers, office secretaries, and file clerks. These schedules provided minimum and maximum rates of pay for each class of workers in each of three classes of counties, these classes being differentiated by their case loads. The tentative salary schedules are given in the following table:

Suggested Personnel and Salary Range for Counties
Where Combined Case Load is Under 2,000
(40 Counties)

| | Minimum | Maximum |
|---|---|---|
| Executive Director | $125.00 | $150.00 |
| Junior Visitor | 70.00 | 90.00 |
| Senior Visitor | 90.00 | 110.00 |
| Stenographer B | 65.00 | 80.00 |
| Office Secretary (File Clerk, Intake Secretary etc.) | 90.00 | 110.00 |

Where Combined Case Load is Between 2,000 and 4,000
(8 Counties)

| | Minimum | Maximum |
|---|---|---|
| Executive Director | $150.00 | $200.00 |
| Case Work Supervisor | 100.00 | 125.00 |
| Junior Visitor | 75.00 | 95.00 |
| Senior Visitor | 95.00 | 120.00 |
| Stenographer B | 70.00 | 85.00 |
| Office Secretary (File Clerk, Intake Secretary etc.) | 90.00 | 110.00 |

Where Combined Case Load is Between 4,000 and 6,000
(17 Counties)

| | Minimum | Maximum |
|---|---|---|
| Executive Director | $150.00 | $250.00 |
| Assistant Director and Case Supervisor | 150.00 | 175.00 |
| Assistant Supervisor | 135.00 | 150.00 |
| Junior Visitor | 80.00 | 100.00 |
| Senior Visitor | 100.00 | 135.00 |
| Stenographer B | 75.00 | 90.00 |
| Stenographer A | 90.00 | 105.00 |
| Office Secretary | 100.00 | 115.00 |
| File Clerk | 60.00 | 80.00 |

While these schedules were merely suggestions, the Bureau of Assistance reports that some of the county boards have made changes in their rates of pay to conform with the suggested standards.

Working Conditions

Thus far no control has been exercised by the Bureau of Assistance over the practices of county boards in regard to hours of work, holidays, vacations, and sick leaves. Each board has been free to regulate these matters in its own way. As might be expected under the circumstances, the practices of the various boards are far from uniform.

Transfers and Promotions

While transfers and promotions of employes of county boards have been subject to the approval of the Bureau of Assistance, that approval has usually been given as a matter of course. In promotions to the position of executive secretary and to the higher ranks of social work, however, the Bureau has been more exacting in its policy. For example, promotions from junior visitor to visitor have been scrutinized to determine whether the persons to be promoted possessed the standard qualifications for the higher positions.

Layoffs, Demotions, and Removals

There has been no definite restriction upon the power of the local boards to lay off, demote, or remove employes under their jurisdiction. While the Bureau of Assistance through its field representatives has sometimes endeavored to avert trouble between county-board employes and their superiors, it has not set itself up as an appeal body nor has it interfered in any way with disciplinary actions of the county boards.

Political Activity and Assessments

Under section 17 of the Act of June 25, 1936, employes of the county boards of Mothers' Assistance are restrained from engaging in political activity and are afforded some protection against political assessments. Below is quoted the pertinent portion of that section:

> "No investigator, clerk, or employe of the board shall be a member of or delegate or alternate delegate to any political convention, nor be present at any such convention as an employe or in any official capacity, nor serve as a member of or attend the meetings of any committee of any political party, or take any active part in political management or in political campaigns, or use his or her position to influence political movements, or use his or her position to influence the political action of any other person, nor in any way or manner interfere with the conduct of any election, or the preparation therefor at the polling place, or with the election officers while the vote is being counted, or the vote or ballot box is being returned save only for the purpose of marking and depositing his ballot, nor be within fifty feet of any polling place during voting hours and the counting of the ballots, except for the purpose of residence or travel. No member of the board and no investigator, clerk or other employe of the board shall, directly or indirectly, demand, solicit, collect or receive, or be in any manner concerned in demanding, soliciting, or receiving any assessment, subscription or contribution, whether voluntary or involuntary, intended for any political purpose whatever. Any person who shall violate any of the foregoing provisions shall be guilty of a misdemeanor, and shall,

upon conviction thereof, be punished by a fine not exceeding $500 and forfeit his position."

It is noteworthy that while the provision relating to political activity is strong and sweeping, the one relating to political assessments is not. The latter prohibits members and employes of the board from soliciting and collecting political assessments, but it does not prohibit employes of the board from paying them, nor does it prohibit a person other than a member or employe of the board from soliciting or collecting political assessments from employes of the board.

## State Emergency Relief Board

The State Emergency Relief Board was created by the Act of July 19, 1932. This board is composed of the Governor, the Lieutenant Governor, the Auditor General, the State Treasurer, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives. An executive director appointed by the Board serves as its chief administrative officer. It is not under the control of the Executive Board and has been free to manage its personnel affairs in its own way.

In carrying out its functions, the State Emergency Relief Board operates through numerous local boards appointed by it. The State Board's task is principally that of fund allotment, supervision, and setting of standards. To the local boards belongs the task of distributing the relief money to unemployed persons and their families who are eligible for relief.

### Administrative Machinery

During the first months of its existence, the State Emergency Relief Board had no special machinery for the recruitment and control of personnel and relied to some extent upon the Personnel Bureau in the Governor's office for needed workers. Before the end of the first year of operation, however, steps were taken to deal more systematically with the Board's growing personnel problem. A personnel staff was set up in the State offices of the Board, and to it was entrusted the formulation and administration of policies and standards for the control of personnel affairs not only in the State offices but also in the local areas. This staff is appointed by the executive director of the Board and is directly responsible to him. It is known as the "Personnel Unit" and in this discussion will be referred to by that name.

### Selection and Appointment

In the State offices of the Board, appointments are made by the executive director. He is assisted, however, by the Personnel Unit, which interviews applicants, and for stenographic and typist positions gives tests to determine the applicants' qualifications. Appointments under the local boards are made by those boards and their salaried executives. For social-work positions, the local boards are required to select from lists of persons who have passed examinations given by the Personnel Unit. Some of the local boards give tests of their own in selecting stenographic and clerical workers. No appointment under a local board is final, however, until it has been approved by the Personnel Unit.

Because of their importance in the selection and appointment of employes under the State Emergency Relief Board, something more should be said about the examinations given by the Personnel Unit. These examinations are not required by law. The State Emergency Relief Board introduced them voluntarily and may at any time discontinue them. For that matter,

the Personnel Unit itself is a creature of the Board and may be abolished at a moment's notice by act of the Board.

As typical of the examinations given for social-work positions, the examination constructed for junior visitors in the summer of 1936 may be selected. This examination was given in those local areas in which new workers were needed and on such dates as best suited the convenience of the local boards. To the examination an applicant was admitted if he (1) was a legal resident of Pennsylvania, (2) had been graduated from an accredited high school, (3) was not less than 21 nor more than 45 years of age, and (4) had a minimum of six points in education and/or experience. The announcement of the examination explained that two points credit would be given for each year at an accredited academic college or university and for each year of paid experience in certain related fields, such as teaching, public health nursing, and home economics. Three points would be given for each year at an accredited school of social service, for each year of paid experience with an accredited social work agency, and for each year of experience as a visitor or supervisor with the Emergency Relief Administration. Letters of reference had to be supplied by the candidate to substantiate the records of education and experience as shown in the application.

The examination itself consisted of (1) an evaluation of education and experience, (2) a written test, and (3) a personal interview.

In making the evaluation of education and experience, the Personnel Unit graded each examinee's education and experience as shown in the application. This work was done at the State office in Harrisburg.

For the written test, examinees were required to assemble at a designated place in the local area. A representative of the Personnel Unit, assisted by employes of the local board, directed the conduct of the test in the locality where it was given. The written test was divided into six parts, as follows:

Part 1, right - wrong questions. These consisted of a series of statements some of which were right and others of which were wrong. The examinee's task was to indicate which were right and which were wrong.

Part 2, matching questions. These consisted of a number of words and abbreviations and of names of persons and places in one column and a greater number of definitions and descriptions in an opposite column. The examinee's task was to match the word, abbreviation or name with its appropriate definition or description.

Part 3, problems. These were practical problems in arithmetic, many of them the kind that might confront a person who is responsible for the management of a household or the formulation of a household budget.

Part 4, multiple choice questions. These consisted of a series of statements each one of which made a number of assertions. The examinee's task was to indicate which of these assertions was correct.

Part 5, a series of questions about the examinee's traits of character, conduct, and habits. Each question was followed by two or more descriptive phrases. The examinee was asked to indicate which of these phrases most nearly described himself.

Part 6, a series of debatable statements. The examinee was asked to give his opinion concerning each statement by writing after it one of the following comments: (1) absolutely right, (2) probably right, (3) absolutely wrong, and (4) probably wrong.

After these tests had been given in the various localities, the papers were taken to Harrisburg, where they were graded by the Personnel Unit. All examinees who received a passing mark in the written test were permitted to enter the third part of the examination, the personal interview.

The personal interviews were given in the local area by the staff of the Personnel Unit. Each examinee who passed in the written test was notified by the officials of the local board of the time and place for his appearance for the interview. The interview was made as informal as possible, lasting about forty-five minutes. In the course of the interview, the examinee was encouraged to do most of the talking. The discussion usually centered about problems in relief and social service. When an interview was ended, the interviewer recorded his estimate of the examinee upon a chart, which was designed for grading the following personal characteristics:

1. Physical characteristics

    a. Size
    b. Neatness
    c. Appearance
    d. Posture
    e. Health
    f. Voice quality

2. Personality characteristics

    a. Enunciation
    b. English
    c. Attitude and manner
    d. Emotional balance
    e. Ease (poise)

3. Aptitude for the work

    a. Prejudices and convictions
    b. Honesty and sincerity
    c. Understanding of human problems
    d. Ability to answer and ask questions intelligently
    e. Ability to get along with others

The interviewer was also asked to record his general estimate and recommendation in one of the following ways:

1. Will recommend for appointment without any reservations.
2. Will recommend highly.
3. Would be willing to recommend.
4. Would definitely hesitate to recommend.
5. Would not recommend under any circumstances.

Only those examinees who were given a favorable recommendation in the personal interview were certified to the local board as eligible for appointment. In the reports to the local boards, the names of the eligibles were listed in the order of their scores in the written test. The reports, however, showed, also, the eligibles' credits in education and experience and their ratings in the personal interviews.

This examination procedure, it will be observed, operates like a series of sieves. First there is the sieve of minimum qualifications, then the written test sieve, and finally the personal interview sieve. Each

sieve eliminates some of the applicants. Only those applicants who pass through the first sieve are admitted to the second; only those who pass through the second sieve are admitted to the third; and only those who pass through the third sieve are admitted to a place on the eligible list.

It is important to note that, while eligibles are placed upon a list in the order of their grades in the written test, the local boards may disregard this order in making appointments from the list. Of interest also is the fact that the State Board endeavors to enforce a policy of employing not more than one member of an "immediate family" in its entire organization.

Compensation

The Personnel Unit exercises a close control over salaries under the county boards, as well as in the Harrisburg offices of the State Emergency Relief Board. All changes in rates of pay of employes must be reported to the Personnel Unit and must be approved by it before they can go into effect.

In exercising this control, the Personnel Unit is guided by a classification and compensation plan based upon a report made in 1934 by Dr. Canby Balderston of the University of Pennsylvania. This plan defines a series of standard jobs or classes to which the various positions in the service are allocated. It also includes schedules of standard minimum and maximum rates of pay for a series of twenty-nine different grades. Each class belongs in one of these grades.

The chart below shows the standard annual rates of pay now (February, 1937) in effect for each of the twenty-nine grades.

Annual Rates of Pay

| Grade | Minimum | Maximum |
|---|---|---|
| 0 | $780 | $840 |
| 1 | 840 | 900 |
| 2 | 900 | 960 |
| 3 | 960 | 1020 |
| 4 | 960 | 1080 |
| 5 | 1020 | 1140 |
| 6 | 1020 | 1200 |
| 7 | 1080 | 1260 |
| 8 | 1140 | 1320 |
| 9 | 1200 | 1380 |
| 10 | 1260 | 1440 |
| 11 | 1320 | 1560 |
| 12 | 1440 | 1620 |
| 13 | 1500 | 1740 |
| 14 | 1560 | 1860 |
| 15 | 1680 | 1920 |
| 16 | 1800 | 2040 |
| 17 | 1860 | 2160 |
| 18 | 1920 | 2280 |
| 19 | 2040 | 2400 |
| 20 | 2160 | 2520 |
| 21 | 2280 | 2760 |
| 22 | 2640 | 3060 |
| 23 | 3000 | 3600 |
| 24 | 3360 | 4020 |

Annual Rates of Pay
(continued)

| Grade | Minimum | Maximum |
|---|---|---|
| 25 | 3780 | 4500 |
| 26 | 4200 | 4980 |
| 27 | 4560 | 5460 |
| 28 | 4980 | 6000 |

A clerk of "grade B", for example, belongs in grade 2. Accordingly he would receive $900 a year upon entering the position, and in the course of his employment therein might receive $960 a year. A bookkeeper belongs in grade 8. His minimum compensation therefore would be $1140 a year, and his maximum $1320 a year. In like manner all the other classes of positions are related to the standard salary grades and the incumbents of those positions are paid in accordance with the standard rates prescribed for their grades.

Working Conditions

Working conditions, that is, hours of work, holidays, vacations, and sick-leaves, are regulated from the State office in Harrisburg and are uniform throughout the various units of the State Emergency Relief Board, including the county boards.

The hours of work are, on Mondays to Fridays inclusive, from 8:30 A.M. to 5 P.M., with an hour out for lunch. Only a skeleton organization is maintained at the various offices on Saturdays.

Ten holidays are observed: New Year's Day, Washington's Birthday, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Primary Election Day, Regular Election Day, Armistice Day, Thanksgiving Day, and Christmas Day. The rules provide also that "a skeleton force of at least 15 per cent of the staff will work Good Friday and the regular Saturday schedule will be in effect on the following day. Those employes working on Good Friday will be allowed Easter Monday." An admonition in the rules reads: "There must, however, be no break in the normal flow of relief checks, and, where necessary, night work must be done before such holidays. A skeleton force may be necessary in the county offices on some of the days listed above."

Vacation leaves with pay are minutely regulated. The rules provide in part as follows:

> "Every full-time employe of the SERA and CERA Administrative Staff who began work on or before the beginning of the calendar year and works the entire year is entitled to 15 days regular leave of absence with full pay during a calendar year; or one and one-quarter days for each full month of employment....Paid vacation for the year may be anticipated with the understanding that if the employe leaves before the end of the year, the unearned vacation paid will be deducted from the salary due or returned through an overpayment agreement."

Under the rules only regular days of work are counted in computing the vacation leave of absence. Saturdays, Sundays, and legal holidays occurring during an employe's absence on vacation are not deemed to be vacation days.

Half-time employes are allowed half as many days of vacation with pay as full-time employes. No vacation with pay is granted to employes

paid on an hourly or daily basis.

Sick-leave with pay is granted under the heading of "meritorius leaves." The rules relating to such leaves provide in part as follows:

> "In special and meritorious cases additional leaves of absence with pay for not more than fifteen days in any calendar year may be granted to a full-time employe and not more than seven and one-half days to a half-time employe, to avoid peculiar hardships when the employe is required to be absent from work because of
>
> "1. His or her illness.
>
> "2. Affliction of a member of the employe's immediate family with a serious illness which requires the employe's care and attention.
>
> "3. Contact or exposure to a contagious disease rendering the presence of the employe harmful to other employes in the office.
>
> "4. A death in the employe's immediate family.
>
> "Such leaves of absence, which are not a part of earned vacation, will be called "meritorious leaves of absence" and must be specifically authorized by the department head."

Employes paid on an hourly or daily basis are not granted meritorious leave.

Exceptions to the regulations governing meritorious leave may be made only with the approval of the director of personnel and the executive director of the State Emergency Relief Board.

Transfers and Promotions

After a person has been admitted to the service of the State Emergency Relief Board, either in the State offices or under one of the local boards, he may be transferred and promoted only with the approval of the Personnel Unit. No promotion examinations, however, are given; nor are there specific efficiency ratings of employes by which the local boards might be guided in proposing promotions or the Personnel Unit in approving them.

Layoffs

Because of the necessity of retrenchment in relief expenditures in the last two years, the problem of layoffs has been exceedingly important under the State Emergency Relief Board. In the summer of 1935, a committee of twelve was formed to devise a method of reduction of staff in the relief division that might be used by all the local boards. On this committee were executive directors of local boards, supervisors, and members of the Personnel Unit. Out of its deliberations emerged a plan of employe evaluation consisting of two parts. The first was a merit ranking which would compare each person with all the others of the class and in the same district on the basis of his or her performance on the job. This was to be made by the local supervisors and executive directors. The second was a test of technical information to be administered on a State-wide basis.

In September, 1935, this plan of employe evaluation was put into execution. How it was applied is described as follows by Mr. Boyd R. Sheddan, director of the Personnel Unit:

"After the data on the evaluation were compiled, reports were sent to the respective areas and counties. These reports consisted of two rankings: one was the merit ranking and the other the test ranking. These rankings were submitted on the basis of districts for all areas and counties with more than 100 visitors, and on the basis of the entire area or county where there were less than 100 visitors. The rankings for junior supervisors were submitted on the basis of the entire area and county in each case. Each county was then supplied with a suggested procedure for treating the data obtained as a result of the State-wide evaluation. Four different variations of a technique for combining these data were suggested in order that each local administrative unit could select the one best adapted to its individual needs.

"The following four methods of treating the data were suggested: First the graphic method. In this case, the test and merit rankings could be arranged in the order of magnitude in parallel columns, and straight lines could be drawn connecting each individual's merit ranking with his or her test rankings. Such a graphic representation gives a clear picture of the relative standing of the visitors in a district or area as the case might be. Ordinarily, some visitors had a high ranking on both phases of the evaluation; likewise some were low on both. The second suggested method of treating the data was to weight the merit and test rankings equally and combine into a composite ranking. The third method suggested a weighting of the merit ranking 66 2/3 per cent, and the test ranking 33-1/3 per cent; while the fourth suggested a merit weighting of 75 per cent and the test ranking 25 per cent.

"It was not mandatory for the local units to make use of the evaluation in their retrenchment procedure, or to confine themselves to any of the above mentioned treatments of the data. However, since all of the local units cooperated so wholeheartedly in making the evaluation, and since it was designed to combine the outstanding features of success in the job into two categories, it was felt that the data would offer the executives a rather objective and impartial basis upon which to retrench. It was also thought that by proceeding upon such a complete evaluation basis, either in retrenching or recommending employes for advancement when vacancies occur, that such decisions would be fair and could be justified to the employes themselves. Naturally, at certain times other factors would necessarily have to be taken into account; namely, such factors as the possession of an automobile, need, geographical location, etc."

Mr. Sheddan reports that of the 30 areas and counties into which the State was then divided for relief and administration, 24 are known to have made use of the evaluation in making retrenchments. "Eight used a 50-50 weighting of the merit ranking and test ranking. Seven used a 66 2/3 - 33 1/3 weighting. Four used a 75-25 weighting. Five used still other proportionate weightings. Seventeen used the same method for junior supervisors as they used for visitors, and five used different methods. These

different methods usually took into account the extent of previous experience and training in a school of social work." According to Mr. Sheddan, during the first year after the date of the evaluation, the visiting staff was reduced from 4000 to 1600. "More than one-half of those released had merit ranks in the lowest two-fifths of their respective groups, and almost one-half had test scores in the lowest two-fifths of their respective groups."

Demotions and Removals

In the State offices, the executive director of the State Board exercises the demotion and removal power, but in practice he does not demote or remove any employe without the approval of the Personnel Unit. The local boards are permitted a fairly free hand in making removals in their jurisdictions. Employes have no legal right to appeal from the decision of the removing authorities.

Political Activity and Assessments

There is no legal prohibition against political assessments under the State Emergency Relief Board, but employes of that board are legally restrained from engaging in political activity. This restraint is imposed by section 6, of the Act of August 7, 1936, which reads as follows:

> "No investigator, clerk or other employe of the State Emergency Relief Board shall be a member or delegate or alternate delegate to any political convention, nor be present at any such convention as an employe or in any official capacity, nor serve as a member of or attend meetings of any committee of any political party, or take an active part in political management or in political campaigns, or use his position to influence the political action of any other person, nor in any way or manner interfere with the conduct of any election or the preparation therefor at the polling place, or with the election officers while the vote is being counted or the vote or ballot box is being returned save only for the purpose of marking and depositing his ballot, nor be within fifty feet of any polling place during voting hours and the counting of the ballots, except for the purpose of residence or travel. Any person who shall violate any of the foregoing provisions shall be guilty of a misdemeanor, and shall, upon conviction thereof, be punished by a fine not exceeding five hundred dollars ($500) and forfeit his position."

Training

Any statement on the personnel policies and practices of the State Emergency Relief Board would be incomplete without at least a reference to its staff training program.

During the period from July, 1934, to the late summer of 1936, a variety of activities were carried on under the direction of a training department at the State offices of the Board. As set forth in a report of June 19, 1936, by Mrs. Mary Clarke Burnett, the head of this department, the objectives of training had been as follows:

> "1. To make available to promising individuals among the local relief staffs, opportunities for training which would equip them to offer leadership in the future.

"2. To assist in developing competence throughout the staff of the agency by making instruction in elementary principles of relief administration available in the local offices.

"3. To strengthen local supervision through group and individual conferences on supervisory problems and techniques."

To attain these objectives various means were employed. In the first place, following a plan already inaugurated by the Federal Emergency Relief Administration, one year scholarships to schools of social work were awarded to persons selected from the supervisory and visiting staffs of the local agencies. For the academic year 1934-35, fifty scholarships were awarded in counties other than Allegheny and Philadelphia; and for the academic year 1935-36, thirty scholarships were awarded: five to Allegheny County, five to Philadelphia, and twenty to the rest of the State.

In the second place, during the period of rapid expansion in the work and personnel of the Board, a small training center was organized for the instruction of persons who were promoted from the visitors' ranks to supervisors. This center was established in a local office, first in Cumberland County and later in Dauphin County. The instruction combined lectures by administrative officials of the Emergency Relief Administration, weekly group meetings for the discussion of supervisory problems, and actual work in the intake and investigation departments of the local office. Four sessions, each of eight weeks duration, were held. A total of 44 persons, eleven in each session, received this instruction. These came from 19 of the 28 administrative areas in the State outside Allegheny and Philadelphia counties.

In the third place, training was given in the local administrative units by members of the staff of the training department. As reported by Mrs. Burnett, the local staffs were "divided into groups on the basis of function and level of performance, each group meeting once a week, usually for a six weeks period. At the request of a local administration, these periods have sometimes been extended to nine or twelve weeks. In places where distance was not too great a factor, inter-county training sessions have been arranged for a special group of workers, such as junior or district supervisors, interviewers, or advanced visitors." Whenever a sufficiently large group of new workers were being added to a county staff, special orientation sessions were arranged for them. In this part of the program, every area and county in the State was included except Allegheny County and Philadelphia, where the training was done by local persons, and one large area where the supervisor herself devoted much of her time in training.

This training program came to an end in the late summer of 1936 when a general curtailment of the Emergency Relief Administration took place. Responsibility for training now rests largely upon the local boards and their executives. The field staff of the State office, however, is available for service to executive directors and supervisors in the counties on problems of supervision and staff training. Early in 1937, there was organized a state-wide committee on training and supervision, composed of eight representatives from the counties, all either executive directors or supervisors. It is anticipated that from this committee will come recommendations by which the regional supervisors and the local executives may be guided in dealing with problems of supervision and training. It should be mentioned also that members of county staffs are allowed time for one course in a school of social work.

## Outdoor Relief Staff Under Poor Boards

For the purpose of this report it is not necessary to examine in detail the employment policies and practices under the various poor boards of the state. The number of employes engaged in outdoor relief work under the poor boards is small, probably not greater than 200. In many of the poor districts, moreover, no one is employed for outdoor relief work. The State Department of Welfare in its report of 1934 on "Poor Relief Administration in Pennsylvania" reported that of the 302 poor districts studied in this respect, only 29 employed investigators to report upon the merits of relief cases. How these few districts deal with personnel problems is not sufficiently important to justify elaborate inquiry.

It may be said, however, that the poor boards have legal power to appoint employes, to fix their compensation, and to remove them at pleasure. In the exercise of this power, they are not subject to the control of any state department nor to any civil service regulations. Employes of the poor districts are not legally restrained from engaging in political activity, nor are they legally protected from political assessments.

## SECTION THREE

## A Suggested Personnel Program

### Introduction

In suggesting a personnel program for the Department of Public Assistance, the Committee assumes that this department will be organized in general accord with the plan recommended by the Pennsylvania Committee on Public Assistance and Relief. It accordingly assumes that the department will be presided over by a secretary of public assistance, appointed by the Governor, with the advice and consent of the Senate; that in the department there will be an administrative board known as the State Board of Public Assistance, which will make rules, hear appeals, and recommend to the Governor needed changes in administrative policy and law; that this board will be composed of nine members, appointed by the Governor for overlapping terms of six years; and that the members of this board will serve without compensation. The Committee also assumes that in each county there will be a local board of assistance, composed of from seven to eleven members; that these boards will be appointed by, or with the approval of, the State authorities; that they will serve without compensation; that they will administer in the counties all the forms of assistance now administered by the county mothers' assistance boards and the county emergency relief boards, and will administer also the outdoor relief now provided by the poor boards; and that the state department of public assistance will have general supervision over the local boards, allotting funds to them, setting standards of relief for their guidance, and prescribing rules to be observed in local administration.

The Committee desires at the outset to record its satisfaction with much that it has found in the present personnel policies and practices of the units of government that are to be merged into the new department. It wishes especially to commend the efforts that have been made by the State Emergency Relief Board to establish a merit system on a voluntary basis. To a considerable extent the program which the Committee is suggesting for the new department is already in effect in one or more of the units out of which the new department will be formed.

Only the broad outlines of a program can be set forth within the compass of this report. It is neither possible nor necessary that the Committee anticipate every question that may arise in the actual administration of the department's personnel affairs. The Committee has, however, given consideration to the larger problems of personnel policy that may be encountered, and ventures to present its conclusions and recommendations concerning them. These conclusions and recommendations may be grouped under the following main headings: (1) advisability of a merit system for the department, (2) scope of such a merit system, (3) administrative machinery, (4) classification of positions, (5) selection and appointment, (6) compensation, (7) transfer and promotion, (8) working conditions, (9) layoffs, (10) suspensions, demotions, and removals, (11) political activity and assessments, and (12) miscellaneous problems.

### Advisability of Merit System

Of all the questions that presented themselves to the Committee, the first was: Shall the new department operate under the merit system? This question naturally resolved itself into two parts: (1) Shall the department operate under the merit system at all? (2) If so, shall it operate under a merit system covering the entire State government, if such a system is adopted, or shall it have a merit system of its own? On these questions

the Committee's conclusions with the reasons therefor were as follows:

1. That the new department should operate under a merit system.

A definition of the merit system, at least in general terms, is a necessary preface to any explanation of this first important conclusion. Under a merit system, if it works ideally, employes are selected and appointed because of their superior qualifications for the work to be done; they are paid in accordance with the relative worth of their services to the government; they are promoted upon their demonstrated efficiency in the positions they occupy and their superior capacity for the higher positions to which they aspire; and they are laid-off, demoted, or removed with an eye single to the good of the service and not for political, religious or racial reasons. In other words, only the merit of the present or prospective worker determines the treatment accorded him. As no system ever works ideally, any arrangement that gives reasonable assurance that the ideal standards will be closely approximated may legitimately be called a merit system.

The merit system has already gained wide acceptance in American government. Since 1883, when the famous Pendleton Act was enacted by Congress, providing the merit system for the federal government, that system has been adopted in many other jurisdictions in the United States. At the end of 1936, ten states had the merit system in effect in their civil services. These states and the years in which they adopted the merit system are as follows: New York, 1883; Massachusetts, 1884; Illinois, 1905; Wisconsin, 1905; Colorado, 1907; New Jersey, 1908; Ohio, 1912; California, 1913; Maryland, 1920; and Kentucky, 1936. Four other States, Arkansas, Tennessee, Maine, and Connecticut, have adopted the system since 1936. About 450 cities and towns are wholly or partly under the merit system. These include the 31 largest cities in the United States. Of the 93 cities having a population of 100,000 and over, 80 are under the merit system. Approximately 65 per cent of the urban population of the country lives in cities and towns that are wholly or partly under the merit system. Even in county government, the merit system has gained a foothold. It is now in effect in all counties in New York and Ohio, in 9 counties in New Jersey, in 4 counties in California, in many branches of county service in Massachusetts, and in a number of counties in other states.

Public opinion, moreover, is unmistakably for the merit system. That this is true is shown in many ways. Both the major political parties in the United States in their 1936 platforms went on record for its extension in the public service of the country. It has been recently endorsed by numerous non-political organizations. Among them are the American Road Builders Association; the Mining Institute of America; the National Board of Fire Underwriters; the National Prison Congress; the National Probation Association; the Public Education Association of New York; the American Federation of Labor; the State Bank Division of the American Bankers Association; the National Association of State Auditors, Comptrollers and Treasurers; the Family Welfare Association of America; the National Recreation Association; the National League of Women Voters; and the Commission of Inquiry on Public Service Personnel. A recent poll conducted by the Institute of Public Opinion strongly favored the merit system. Even more significant is the fact that in nearly every instance where the voters have been asked to express themselves at the ballot box on the merit system they have voted overwhelmingly for it.

Finally, while no comprehensive investigation has ever been made of the effect of the merit system on the cost and efficiency of government, there is much scattered evidence to show that economy and efficiency are promoted by the system. A few examples of such evidence may be cited.

"Under the spoils system in the year 1911 in the City treasurer's office there were 75 employes, at which time cash transactions totalled $41,014,000. In 1929, under civil service, with only 50 employes, cash transactions totalled $149,536,946." Jack Simpson of City Treasurer's Office, Seattle, Washington, at Convention of Washington Civil Service League, 1934.

"The city of Lynn, with a soldier agent under civil service regulations, has displayed to the State that it pays to have their soldier agents under civil service. In Lynn it is estimated that the city is saving $30,000 to $40,000 yearly as a result of having the soldier aid agent under civil service." Lynn, Mass. "Telegram-News," June 23, 1935.

"For the year prior to the adoption of the Charter and the merit system in the County Clerk's office, the average number of pages written by copyists in long hand in the probate minute books was about five pages a day. During the first year under civil service rules the new copyists averaged 16 written pages a day.

"In the tax collector's office, prior to the adoption of the merit system, the writing of 75 bills during the busy season was a standard day's work. During the first year of civil service, 100 was the minimum and the next year 200. Improved personnel and improved methods made this possible.

"In the Assessor's office, the average number of personal property statements delivered daily by each outside deputy was 50 before the merit system was adopted. Under the first year of civil service, the average was raised to 70 and it is now 80." Statement of Secretary of Civil Service Commission, San Francisco, California, 1920.

"In 1931 it cost New York State more than $500,000, for salaries of employes of the State Legislature. These legislative positions are filled entirely on the basis of their value as patronage.

"In Wisconsin, where legislative employes are selected after competitive tests by the State Personnel Bureau, salaries of such employes totalled approximately $90,000 in 1931.

"Since the Wisconsin legislature in 1931 met for 160 days, as against only 110 days in New York, the cost for personal service in New York was ten times as great as in Wisconsin. It is significant that the Wisconsin legislature employed only 107 persons to serve a body of 133 members, whereas the New York legislature employed at least 325 to serve 201 members. The average cost for personal service in Wisconsin per day was $564, while in New York it was $5,150." The Business Value of the Merit System, by the National Civil Service Reform League.

It stands to reason, moreover, that efficiency and economy will result from a system that insures a higher level of competence in the public

service, a lower turnover of personnel, and greater freedom of civil servants from the distractions of politics. The merit system insures all of these things.

2. That the proposed Department of Public Assistance might well come under a state-wide merit system or a merit system covering a number of state departments; but if neither a state-wide system nor a system covering a number of state departments can be established at this time, there should be a merit system for the Department of Public Assistance alone.

If a state-wide merit system or one covering a number of departments should be adopted in the present session of the Legislature, the simplest way of providing for the proper administration of the personnel affairs of the proposed Department of Public Assistance would be to place that department under the broader system. While the function of the new department will be different from that of the department of highways, or even that of the department of health, the personnel problems of a department administering relief are fundamentally the same as those of other departments. The selection of employes, the classification of positions, the standardization of pay, the control of transfers and promotions, the regulation of working conditions, the determination of order of layoff in times of retrenchment, the control of demotions and removals, the prevention of political activity and political assessments - all these are matters that require attention in all branches of the state service and call for the application of the same techniques in one unit of government as in another.

Many kinds of welfare activities are in fact now under state-wide merit systems in other states. In California, the Department of Social Welfare, which supervises poor relief, aid to dependent children, assistance to the blind, and old age assistance, is under the state merit system, though the State Relief Administration is not. In Colorado, the state merit system applies to the administrative and clerical positions in the State Department of Public Welfare, which supervises all forms of assistance, including general home relief, old age assistance, aid to dependent children, aid to the blind, and child welfare activities. In Illinois, the Department of Public Welfare is under the state merit system. This department supervises the care of children, care of the blind, the state mental hospitals, and the state penal and correctional institutions. In Maryland, the state merit system covers the Board of State Aid and Charities, which supervises emergency relief, old age assistance, aid to the blind, assistance to dependent children in their homes, and care of dependent, neglected, and delinquent children. It applies also to the county welfare boards. In Massachusetts, where the State Civil Service Commission has jurisdiction over cities as well as over state departments, the state merit system applies to all welfare services of cities, and to the State Department of Public Welfare. Under the supervision of this department are aid to mothers, assistance to the aged, care of dependent children, and various state institutions. In New Jersey, practically all welfare services of the state are under the state merit system. Among those under the system are assistance to mothers, the blind, and the aged; care of the mentally ill, the feeble minded, and the epileptics; and management of the penal and correctional institutions of the state. Under the state merit system are also the county welfare boards in the 9 counties that have accepted the state system, and unemployment relief in the 11 cities that have accepted the state system. In New York, all state welfare activities, including assistance to the aged and unemployment relief, are under the state system. In Ohio, the state system applies to all state and county welfare agencies, including county boards of public assistance. In Wisconsin, all state welfare activities, including supervision over local unemployment relief, are under the state system.

There are, moreover, distinct advantages in having the proposed Department of Public Assistance under a merit system that is state-wide or at least applies to a number of other departments. In the first place, it is easier under such a system than under a departmental system to provide an impartial board to hear appeals from employes who feel they have been unjustly disciplined by their superiors. To have the necessary detachment, a board of hearings ought to stand wholly outside the department from which the appeals come. It is rather cumbersome, however, to have for each department a separate board of hearings that is appointed by the Governor or by some other extradepartmental appointing power. On the other hand, under a merit system applying to a number of departments or to the entire state service, the personnel board that would administer the system would be independent of all departments and therefore would have complete detachment in hearing appeals from employes in those departments.

In the second place, an outside body can enforce adherence to merit principles more effectively than can a unit within the department. A true merit system takes into account the rights of the employes as well as the convenience of the administrators. An outside body is in a better position to protect the interests of both groups than a departmental agency responsible to the executive head of the department.

In the third place, it is desirable in personnel administration to have a highly specialized staff, and this can be provided more readily in an agency that serves many departments than in one that serves a single department. A number of distinct techniques must be used, and a corresponding variety of technicians should be employed, in personnel administration. On a well-rounded personnel staff there should be persons who are specialists in the construction of written tests, others who are well qualified as interviewers, and still others who know the technique of rating individual efficiency. There should be also statisticians and research workers. A departmental personnel agency, however, would be disproportionately expensive if it built up so varied a staff as this; only under a merit system that applies to a larger service could the expense of a highly specialized personnel staff be fully justified.

So urgent, however, does the Committee regard the need of a merit system for the assistance services that it strongly favors the immediate adoption of a merit system for the Department of Public Assistance alone if a merit system of broader application cannot be adopted at this time. For unless the men and women who will serve as field visitors, clerical assistants, supervisors, administrators, statisticians, accountants, and in numerous other capacities, are employed solely on a merit basis the best results will not be obtained and both taxpayers and those in need of assistance will suffer in consequence.

It is noteworthy that the urgency of this need has been felt so keenly in a number of states that, without legislative mandate, welfare officials have established partial merit systems by voluntary action. The voluntary merit system of the State Emergency Relief Board in Pennsylvania has been described in a previous section of this report. Similar voluntary systems have been established by the Emergency Relief Administration in Michigan, the State Board of Social Welfare in Florida, the Old Age Assistance Commission in Texas, the Department of Public Welfare in Oklahoma, and the Department of Public Welfare and the Unemployment Compensation Division of the State Treasury Department in Indiana. A voluntary merit system, however, can be too easily abolished. To meet the need adequately, Pennsylvania should establish a system that has back of it the mandate of the legislature.

## Scope of Merit System

The second principal question is: What part of the personnel of the department should be under the merit system? Concerning this question, the Committee makes the following recommendation:

> That all officers and employes in the Department of Public Assistance and under the County Boards of Assistance be under the merit system, except the following:
>
> a. The secretary of public assistance.
> b. The members of the State Board of Public Assistance.
> c. The members of the County Boards of Public Assistance.
> d. One secretary or confidential clerk to the secretary of public assistance.

This recommendation is based upon the principle that policy-determining officials should not be under the merit system, but all other officials and employes should be. Obviously, the secretary of public assistance is a policy-determining official. He is appointed by the Governor, with the advice and consent of the Senate, to carry out administration policies. The members of the State Board of Public Assistance and of the various county boards are also policy-determining officials. While the secretary or confidential clerk to the secretary of public assistance is not a policy-determining official, it is customary under civil service laws to permit heads of departments to select their own secretaries without restriction. In excepting this employe from the system, the Committee is merely conforming to customary practice.

## Administrative Machinery

Whether the merit system is to be state-wide, or limited to a number of departments, or to apply to the Department of Public Assistance only, there must be machinery for its administration. The Committee did not concern itself with either of the first two alternatives, but confined itself to the question of machinery for a merit system applying only to the Department of Public Assistance. Concerning this problem, the Committee makes the following recommendation:

> That the merit system for the department be administered by a departmental personnel director under the control of the State Board of Public Assistance. The personnel director should be appointed by the secretary of public assistance, with the approval of the State Board of Public Assistance, from an employment list established by competitive examination; and he should be removable by the secretary of public assistance, with the approval of the State Board, after being furnished with a written statement of the reasons for removal and afforded an opportunity to be heard publicly in his own defense before the State Board. The competitive examination should be conducted by the State Board or by a special examining committee appointed by the State Board. In making an appointment from the employment list, the secretary of public assistance and the State Board should select one of the three persons whose names stand highest on the list. The personnel director should receive such salary as may be fixed by the State Board. He should be solely responsible for the administration of the merit system, but the State Board should act as the rule-making body and board of appeals.

It seemed to the Committee better to use the State Board of Public Assistance as the body that will pass upon questions of policy and hear appeals from the employes than to create another board for these purposes. Except during the first few months of the operation of the new merit system, when policies have to be formulated and rules adopted, no great additional burden will be imposed upon the members of the State Board. A separate board for the merit system alone would, under the circumstances, hardly be necessary.

The State Board of Public Assistance, in its relation to this phase of its work, should confine itself to quasi-legislative and quasi-judicial functions. Among these would be the adoption and amendment of rules for the administration of the system; the approval and modification of classification and compensation plans prepared by the personnel dirctor; the hearing of appeals from employes who have been suspended, or are to be demoted or removed; the making of investigations into the operation and effect of the system; and the passing upon such questions of policy as the personnel director may refer to it or which it may on its own initiative take under consideration.

Its first task would be to conduct a competitive examination for personnel director. For this task it might well designate a special board of examiners composed of persons who are conversant with personnel problems. Any person in the United States who has the minimum qualifications prescribed by the State Board of Public Assistance should be admitted to the examination. The non-assembled type of examination would be most appropriate for the position. In such an examination competitors can prepare at home such written discussions as may be required of them and then send their manuscripts, together with evidences of their training, experience, and accomplishments, to the examining board by mail. Only those competitors who are rated as passing on the material submitted by mail would be required to come to Harrisburg for the part of the examination consisting of the personal interview.

To the Committee it seems highly important that the personnel director be a career man and in no sense a political appointee. It would be unfortunate if every new secretary of public assistance appointed a new personnel director. Accordingly, the Committee has suggested that he be selected by competitive examination, that the State Board of Public Assistance participate in his appointment, and that he be removable only with the approval of the State Board and after an opportunity to be heard publicly in his own defense.

## Classification of Positions

A classification of positions is highly essential to good personnel administration. Even the primary function of recruiting cannot be performed without some grouping of positions according to occupations. Fairness in compensation cannot be attained unless employes and the positions they occupy are classified according to their duties. For transfers, too, a classification is important. Without one, it is difficult to prevent the shifting of employes into positions for which they have no known qualifications. An equitable system of promotion is impossible unless there is a classification of positions which indicates vocational lines and the steps leading from the lower to the higher grades in each vocational group. Nor can the service or efficiency of employes be intelligently and fairly measured unless there is a classification of the different kinds of work in which efficiency is expressed in different ways. The Committee therefore makes the following recommendation:

> That, as soon as practicable after the merit system is adopted, the personnel director ascertain and record the duties of all positions under the merit system, and, after consulting the appointing authorities and upon approval of the State Board of Public Assistance, establish classes, allocate the positions to those classes, and prepare and publish a statement giving a complete description of each class. This description should show for each class (1) the title given to the class, (2) the duties and responsibilities exercised by those holding positions allocated to the class, (3) the minimum qualifications required for the satisfactory performance of such duties and the exercising of such responsibilities, (4) so far as practicable, the lines of promotion to and from the class, and (5) the minimum, maximum, and intermediate rates of pay of employes in the class.

As was pointed out in the previous section of this report, positions have already been classified in the state offices of the Department of Welfare and under the State Emergency Relief Board. The classifications in these two branches of the state service, however, are not uniform in plan. Nor has a standard plan of classification been extended to the county boards of mothers' assistance or the outdoor relief service of the poor boards. It is important that all positions under the merit system of the Department of Public Assistance be classified according to a uniform plan.

While the personnel director should prepare the plan of classification and allocate the various positions to the standard classes, that plan should have the approval of the State Board of Public Assistance before it becomes effective. It will be noted that the plan includes a statement of the minimum qualifications to be possessed by employes in each of the standard classes. Determining these qualifications involves passing upon important questions of public policy and should therefore be done upon the responsibility of the State Board. Equally important is the determination of the standard rates of pay. These rates, as will be explained more fully later, should not become effective until they have been approved, not only by the State Board of Public Assistance, but also by the Governor. Even in the allocation of positions to classes, the personnel director should not have the last word. Both the appointing authorities and the employes should have the right to appeal from the decision of the personnel director to the State Board of Public Assistance on the allocation of any position.

It is suggested that the plan of classification be published. This plan should be easily accessible, not only to the State Board of Public Assistance, but also to the appointing authorities of the department and local boards, the employes, the members of the Legislature, and the general public. The appointing authorities need copies of the plan for administrative purposes; present and prospective employes should have access to it so that they may know what are the requirements for appointment, the employment opportunities, and the possibilities of promotion in the service; members of the Legislature should know what the plan provides; and citizens generally should be able to inform themselves regarding it.

## Selection and Appointment

Of outstanding importance to the efficiency of any service is the manner in which employes are selected and appointed. Concerning this aspect of personnel administration in the new department, the Committee makes the following recommendations:

1. That all appointments to permanent positions under the merit system be made from lists of persons who have passed examinations given by the personnel director.

It is one of the essential features of a merit system that only those persons shall be appointed who have demonstrated their qualifications for the positions to be filled by passing an appropriate examination. During the period of installation of the merit system, exceptions to this procedure may be necessary; but once the system has been established there should be no exception in the filling of permanent positions. Lists of persons who have been examined and found qualified should be available for all classes of positions except purely temporary ones, that is, positions that will not be needed for longer than three months. If for any class of permanent positions in which a vacancy occurs, a list should not be available, one should be established at once. There does not appear to be any need, in a department such as the proposed Department of Public Assistance, to fill a vacancy on such short notice that an examination cannot first be held and an appropriate list established.

Employment lists of persons who have passed examinations may be of three kinds: (1) original entrance employment lists, on which appear the names of persons who have passed open competitive examinations for entrance to the service; (2) promotional employment lists, on which appear the names of persons who have passed competitive examinations given only to employes already in the service; and (3) re-employment lists, on which appear the names of persons who have previously been employed, after passing an examination, in positions under the merit system and who, through no fault on their part, have been laid off on account of lack of work or lack of funds, or who for other unprejudicial reasons have been separated from the service. All appointments to permanent positions under the merit system should be made from these lists.

The most important duty of the personnel director is to conduct the examinations for the establishment of employment lists. Upon the manner in which he discharges this duty will depend in large measure the quality of the eligibles who will be available for appointment. To make the examinations best serve their ends, he must give especial attention to the following points: (1) qualifications for the positions to be filled, (2) selection and weighting of tests to be used, (3) time and place of the examination, (4) public notice of the examination, (5) safeguarding the integrity of the examination, (6) the rating of the papers of examinees, and (7) the establishment and publication of the lists of eligibles.

In determining the qualifications that employes should possess to fill a given class of positions, the personnel director should be guided, first, by the minimum qualifications set up in the classification plan already described, second, by the recommendations of the appointing authorities, and, third, by the suggestions of civic, professional, and other groups that may wish to present their views. He should not be bound, however, to accept any recommendations or suggestions made to him. His own determination of the qualifications, moreover, should not be final, but should be subject to review and revision by the State Board of Public Assistance.

The qualifications having been established, the personnel director should select the tests to be used in the examination and determine the weights to be given to each. In the selection of tests he should have wide latitude. He should be free to use any test, whether it be written, oral, or in the form of a demonstration of skill, or any combination of these, that will prove helpful in appraising the examinee's fitness for the class

of work he would be required to do if he is appointed. Among the elements that may be taken into account to determine fitness may be traits of character, education, aptitude, experience, knowledge, skill, personality, physical fitness, and possibly other attributes of the individual.

To each test or separate part of the examination, the personnel director should assign its relative weight. For example, in an examination consisting of (a) an evaluation of training and experience, (b) a written test of technical knowledge, and (c) an oral interview, each of these three parts should be given a separate weight in accordance with its relative importance in the examination. It should, moreover, be permissible to require examinees to achieve at least a passing grade in each part, or in each of several selected parts, of the examination as a condition of being placed on the employment list.

In selecting the time and place of the examination, the personnel director should consider the convenience of the applicants as well as the needs of the service. For most examinations, from the standpoint of the applicants, one time is as good as another, so long as reasonable hours are chosen; but for some examinations the season of the year might make a difference in the number of persons who might enter the competition. For example, if a given examination is of particular interest to students or teachers in certain technical schools or colleges, it would be well to avoid the period when those schools or colleges are in continuous session or are giving their final examinations. It is always important to select the place or places of examination with care. If the examination is state-wide in character, it should be given in various localities chosen because of their easy accessibility and so distributed throughout the state that applicants will not have to travel long distances to attend the examination.

It is important that adequate public notice of examinations be given. All announcements of examinations should set forth, among other things, (1) the title of the class for which the examination is to be held, (2) the standard or most common rates of pay, (3) the duties of the positions in the class, (4) the minimum qualifications to be possessed by applicants, (5) the probable number of appointments to be made in the near future, (6) the subjects and their weights to be included in the examination, (7) the manner and place in which application forms and pertinent information may be obtained, and (8) the time and place of the examination. Such announcements should be posted in appropriate public buildings, should be mailed to persons who might be interested in the examinations themselves or would know of others who might be interested in them, should be given to the newspapers for news stories, and, if necessary, should be inserted as advertisements in selected newspapers and periodicals.

The utmost care should be taken to safeguard the integrity of the examinations. Only trusted employes should handle the examination questions and have them in custody until they are used. Procters who have been fully instructed in their duties should be present throughout the examinations in the rooms in which the tests are given. The identity of the examination papers should be concealed until they have been rated. This may be done by giving each examinee a numbered envelope with an identification card bearing the same number; having him sign his name and address on the identification card, place the card in the envelope, and then seal the envelope; and, when he hands in his examination papers with the sealed envelope, seeing that every page of his examination papers bears his identification number. When the papers have been rated, and the examinee's grades in the written tests have been determined, the sealed envelopes may be opened and the identity of each examinee established.

Great care, too, is necessary in the rating of the examination papers. So far as possible the work of rating should be done by the regular examiners on the personnel staff. Whether the examiners are on the regular staff or have been specially employed for a particular examination, they should be required to initial their work so that responsibility for all ratings may be definitely fixed upon the examiners who made them. In so-called short-answer tests, the ratings may be made by trained clerical employes. Incidentally, it is to be observed that in short-answer tests the work of rating is much easier than in free-answer tests. The factor of human judgment, too, is eliminated in short-answer tests, whereas it is very much present in free-answer tests.

Finally, the establishment and publication of the lists of eligibles is important. When all examinees have been rated and their final grades have been determined, the names of all those who have received a passing final grade should be placed upon the employment list in the order of their grades, the names of those receiving the highest grades being placed highest on the list. The list should then be publicly posted. All examinees, moreover, should be advised by mail of their ratings, whether they have been placed on the employment list, and, if so, of their relative standing on the list.

> 2. That persons who have occupied positions under the merit system after passing an appropriate examination, and have been laid off without fault on their part, should be given preference in appointment over other persons.

This means, that, when a vacancy in a permanent position is to be filled, and an appropriate re-employment list is available, the vacancy should be filled by the appointment of a person whose name is on the re-employment list. Only if there is no appropriate re-employment list, or if no one whose name is on the re-employment list is willing to accept the appointment, should the vacancy be filled by the appointment of a person whose name is on the appropriate employment list.

Such a policy of preference for former employes who have rendered competent and faithful service seems amply justified. It commends itself as fair to the veteran worker who is making the public service a career. His claim to employment in the service certainly is stronger than that of any outsider. It is stronger, too, than the claim to promotion of any person in the service. This policy is supported also by accepted practice under merit systems throughout the country.

It is necessary, however, to place a time limit upon this preference. Many things may happen to weaken the claim of the former employe. His efficiency may become impaired, or he may obtain satisfactory employment in another field. Under ordinary circumstances a name should not remain on a re-employment list for a period longer than two years, but it should be permissible to extend this period under unusual circumstances. Such extension, however, should be granted before the expiration of the original time limit.

The objection may be made that such preference may force the department to take back incompetent persons. To this it may be answered that a conscientious administrator will not lay off an incompetent employe; he will dismiss him instead. Employes who are dismissed would not be placed upon a re-employment list.

> 3. That in filling a vacancy from a re-employment list, the appointing authority should appoint the person whose name is at the head of the list; and in filling a vacancy from an employment list, the appointing authority should

appoint one of the three persons whose names are at the head of the list. Persons appointed from employment lists should serve for a probationary period and become permanent appointees only if during that period their service has been satisfactory. If it has not been satisfaotory, the appointing authority should drop them from the service. Separate lists may be provided for counties or regions.

One of the essential features of a morit system is that persons who have been found eligible for employment and are listed in an order of priority, determined either by their records of performance or length of service if they are former employes entitled to re-employment, or by their examination ratings if they are candidates for original entrance to the service or for promotion, shall be appointed in the order in which their names appear on the list, with only a narrow margin of choice for the appointing authority. If the order of priority is not observed, there is always danger that political sponsorship will force its way into the appointing process.

It is in recognition of this danger that nearly all civil service laws in the United States limit the discretion of appointing authorities in making appointments from employment lists. Of the nine states in which thoroughgoing merit systems are now in effect, six (New York, Massachusetts, Wisconsin, New Jersey, Ohio, and California) have the so-called "rule of three," that is, the certification for a single vacancy of the three names standing highest on the appropriate employment list; two states, (Illinois and Colorado) require the appointment of the head of the list; and one state (Maryland) permits a certification of five names for a single vacancy. It is to be noted also that in Pennsylvania the State Liquor Control Act requires the appointment of the head of the list, the State Unemployment Compensation Act provides for the rule of three, the law for the city government of Philadelphia limits the certification for a single vacancy to the two names at the head of the list; the law for the city governments of Pittsburgh and Scranton provides for the rule of three; the law for third class cities permits a certification of four names for a single vacancy; and the law for school districts of the first class (Philadelphia and Pittsburgh) provides for the rule of three in the appointment of teachers.

In appointments from re-employment lists, the Committee recommends the appointment of the head of the list, instead of one of the first three on the list. This is now the rule in New Jersey. So long as persons who are on re-employment lists are to be given preference in appointment over other eligibles, it seems only logical to follow the New Jersey practice. If the rule of three or some other rule giving latitude to the appointing authorities is applied to re-employment lists, some of the persons on the list may be passed over altogether and persons who have never been in the service may be appointed instead. There is, moreover, not the same need for latitude of choice from a re-omployment list as from an employment list. The men and women on the re-employment list have demonstrated their fitness in actual service in the department, whereas those on the employment list are still unknowns.

The probationary period for appointees from employment lists is in a sense a further test of the qualifications of the would-be public servant. During this period the appointing officer is afforded an opportunity to observe the new appointee at work. If he proves unsatisfactory, the appointing officer may drop him from the service at the end of the probationary period without the formality of written charges. On the other hand, if the new appointee proves satisfactory and is retained beyond the end of the probationary period, he automatically becomes a permanent member of the service.

In length, the probationary period may vary for different classes of positions. For routine positions it may be only three months, but for professional and administrative positions it may be six months or even longer. The length of probation should, however, be prescribed in the rules of the State Board of Public Assistance.

It is suggested that separate employment lists may be provided for counties or regions. Other things being equal, any county board is fully justified in appointing a local resident rather than a person who lives elsewhere. Certainly it is more convenient for county boards to select persons who live in the local area, and it is more convenient also for employes to have work in their own localities. These considerations provide much justification for separate lists for counties or regions.

It would be unfortunate, however, if the privilege of having county or regional lists should be used in such a manner that only residents of a locality could be employed in that locality. Both the employes and the public service would suffer from such a policy. The employes would find their opportunities for a career in the public service limited; and the public service would lose its attraction for promising young men and women. Local residence requirements are in fact today one of the great handicaps to the public service in the United States.

There are ways of providing the convenience of local employment lists and yet avoiding their handicaps. In the first place, the successful examinees in a state-wide examination could have their names placed on a single state-wide list as well as on the lists of those counties or regions in which they happen to reside. A county board might then be permitted to select either from the head of the state-wide list or from the head of the county or regional list. Under this arrangement, the county board could, if it wished to do so, appoint from the state list an eligible who lives outside the county rather than an eligible on the county list. In the second place, upon the request of any eligible, the personnel director might transfer his name from one county list to another, provided the transfer met with the approval of the county board to whose list the eligible desired to be transferred. When an eligible is thus transferred to another list, his standing on that list should be determined by his examination rating.

## Compensation

The Committee has not undertaken to appraise the adequacy of present rates of compensation in the units of the state government that are to be merged into the new department, nor is it prepared to recommend specific rates for any class of workers. It has concerned itself solely with the manner in which the pay of employes is determined and controlled. Its recommendation on this subject is as follows:

> That, as soon as practicable after the merit system becomes effective, the personnel director prepare and report to the State Board of Public Assistance a plan of compensation for all employes under the merit system, together with rules for the enforcement of the plan; that this plan include for each class of positions under the merit system a schedule of minimum, maximum and intermediate rates of pay; that the State Board, after making such changes in the plan as it may deem proper, report it to the Governor; and that, after the plan has been approved by the Governor, either as it was reported to him or as modified by him, it be enforced by the personnel director.

A compensation plan providing standard rates of pay for each of the various classes of positions is essential to any merit system. All employes performing the same class of work under substantially the same conditions should receive the same pay. If pay and work are not thus related to each other, the personnel agency is seriously handicapped in administering the merit system. In the selection of employes, it would find difficulty in justifying the use of the same examination for positions paying widely varying salaries. In regulating transfers, it would have to disregard either the duties of the positions between which transfers are permitted or the rates of pay attaching to those positions. Obviously, no equitable scheme of promotion can be devised or enforced if a promotion in duties does not always mean also an advance in pay. Only if the same standards of compensation obtain in all units of government under the merit system can that system be intelligently and equitably enforced.

As stated in a previous section of this report, compensation standards have already been established, by the State Executive Board for the state offices of the Department of Welfare as well as for many other state departments, and by the State Emergency Relief Board for its state offices and the various county boards under its supervision. Such standards, however, have not as yet been applied on a state-wide basis to the county mothers' assistance boards or the outdoor relief work of the poor boards. It will therefore be necessary, when the proposed Department of Public Assistance is established, to prepare a compensation plan that will cover all units in the new department, those not yet under any state-wide plan as well as those already under such a plan.

The preparation of the plan should be entrusted to the personnel director, but the Committee considers it important that the plan should not become effective until it has been approved by both the State Board of Public Assistance and the Governor. Standards of compensation involve questions of public policy that should be referred to the policy-determining officials. There are two reasons for requiring the approval of the Governor as well as that of the State Board of Public Assistance. One is that rates of pay directly effect the state's budget and the amount of taxes the state must levy. Certainly only the highest policy-determining official of the state should have the final word on matters of such importance. The other reason is that there should be substantial uniformity in standards of compensation throughout the state government. It would be unfortunate if the State Executive Board established compensation standards on one level and the Department of Public Assistance established such standards on another level. This inconsistency is more certain to be avoided if the Governor has a determining voice on salary standards in the Department of Public Assistance as he has now, as chairman of the State Executive Board, on salary standards in the departments under the control of the State Executive Board.

Once the plan and the rules for its enforcement have been approved they should be administered by the personnel director. No employe under the merit system should receive any compensation until the personnel director has approved his rate of pay as within the scope of this plan.

## Transfers and Promotions

While transfers and promotions are closely related, they should not be confused. Both involve moving an employe from one position to another. If the employe is moved from one position to another in the same class, he is said to be transferred; if he is moved to a position in another class having a higher maximum rate of compensation, he is said to be promoted. In the first instance, his duties remain substantially the same; in the second, his duties change. Ordinarily a transfer involves a change of de-

partmental location for the employe, as from one bureau to another. A promotion, too, may involve a change from one bureau or department to another, but more often it involves only a step upward in the same bureau or department.

With these definitions of transfers and promotions in mind, the Committee makes the following recommendations:

> 1. That transfers be permitted from one sub-division of the department to another and from one county board to another. A transfer from one county board to another, however, should be approved not only by the personnel director, but also by the two county boards concerned.

It is to the advantage of both the service and the employe to allow transfers to be made freely from one administrative unit to another. The service benefits whenever the needs for additional workers in one unit are met by the transfer of employes from another unit rather than by the employment of more workers. The employe benefits whenever he is transferred to another unit rather than laid off. He benefits also from the greater variety of experience that comes with working in a number of different units.

In emphasizing the advantages of allowing transfers freely, the Committee is not unmindful of abuses to which the power of transfer is subject. Under lax control by the personnel director, an employe may be placed, under the guise of transfer, in a position for which he has no known qualifications. Only by enforcing strict adherence to the rule that transfers may be made only to positions in the same class can the personnel director prevent such abuse. Again, the power to transfer may be used to force an employe out of the service. For example, an employe may be transferred to a position in another part of the state when it is known that his domestic circumstances make it impossible for him to move to that location. Such a proposed transfer should be regarded as tantamount to removal and should be subject to the same safeguards as removals.

Transfers should not be confused with temporary details. An appointing officer should be free to use any employe for a few days on work other than that for which he was examined if it is necessary to do so to meet unusual demands for service.

> 2. That, whenever practicable, vacancies in the higher classes of positions be filled by promotion, and that promotions be made from lists of eligibles established by competitive examinations.

In the last few years we have heard much of the importance of making the public service a "career service". There can be no career service, however, unless the higher places are accessible by promotion. While it is wise occasionally to introduce "new blood" in the upper ranks by bringing in persons from the outside, it is generally a good policy to fill the higher posts by the promotion of individuals already in the service. Such a policy helps the morale of employes and makes the service more attractive to promising young men and women.

But it is not enough simply to have promotions; the promotions must be made on merit. This is more easily said than achieved. How best to apply the merit system to promotions in the public service is one of the unsolved problems of public personnel administration. There is, however, fairly general acceptance of the view that the following three factors ought to be considered in weighing the relative claims of employes to promotion: (a) seniority, (b) efficiency, and (c) capacity for more respon-

sible duties. On the methods to be employed in measuring each of these factors there is less agreement.

Seniority, to be sure, is easily determined. It may be ascertained by mere reference to the employment records maintained by the personnel director.

Measuring individual efficiency is more difficult. In fact, all the various systems of efficiency rating that have thus far been given extended trials in the public service have proved disappointments. The need of some means of measuring and comparing individual efficiency, however, is so great that experimentation with new systems continues. No doubt in time the rating of efficiency will be done far more satisfactorily than it has been done in the past. At any rate, the least that any personnel agency can do is to try to devise a system of rating that will answer the need.

Difficult also is the problem of measuring an employe's capacity for more responsible duties. It is, however, no more perplexing than the problem of determining the fitness of applicants for entrance to the service. Much the same technique may be used to test and appraise mental ability and traits of personality of aspirants for promotion as of applicants for original entrance.

The Committee recommends competitive examinations to determine the relative fitness of employes for promotion. Such examinations can be made to include all the three factors just mentioned. The first two, seniority and efficiency, would be rated on the basis of employment and efficiency records. The third, capacity for more responsible work, would be determined by written and oral tests. In the examination, each of these factors can be weighted according to its relative importance for the higher post to be filled. While the competitive examination is not a perfect device for the purpose, it has been found to be superior to "free promotion", that is, complete freedom on the part of the appointing officer to promote any employe he wishes to promote.

In promotions as in original appointments, the appointing authorities should select from the head of the eligible list, with a narrow margin of choice. The rule of three would provide a certain margin of choice without leaving the door wide open to the system of political sponsorship.

## Working Conditions

The term "working conditions" is here used to include hours of work, holidays, vacations, and sick-leaves. All these are phases of employment that effect the welfare and morale of employes and therefore the efficiency and cost of government.

On this subject, the Committee makes only the following general recommendation:

> That the regulations governing hours of work, holidays, vacations, and sick-leaves be made uniform throughout all the units to be merged in the new department, and that the departmental regulations be kept as nearly as possible in harmony with the regulations of the State Executive Board.

It seems to the Committee that the privileges granted to employes under the present regulations of the State Executive Board and the State Emergency Relief Board are not unduly generous. On vacations they might indeed be liberalized. Employes are not permitted under existing regulat-

ions to take in any year, in addition to their regular vacation, any part of the unused vacation of a previous year. In some jurisdictions, among them the Federal government and the State of California, employes are permitted to do so. This privilege, it is true, may be abused. Unless it is firmly controlled, some employes may regularly reserve all or a part of their vacations in alternate years in order to have more than the normal length of vacation in the other years. Such a practice obviously would distribute vacation leave so unevenly as largely to defeat its purpose. Under strict administrative control, however, this abuse would not occur. The Committee suggests, therefore, that, in justice to employes who because of the demands of their work were unable to take all their vacation in a given year, and as a matter of consideration for employes who may occasionally want to reserve a part of a year's vacation so they may be able to carry out plans that will require a longer vacation the following year, the present regulations in Pennsylvania be modified to permit employes to take the unused portion of any year's vacation in addition to the regular vacation in the following year.

## Layoffs

In any organization, but particularly in a department concerned with relief, it is necessary at times to lay off employes because of lack of work or lack of funds. It is to be assumed, therefore, that the proposed Department of Public Assistance will find the regulation of layoffs a recurring problem in the future.

No hard and fast rule can be laid down on this rather perplexing subject. Beyond indicating the more important factors that should be taken into account in laying off employes, the Committee is not disposed to venture with suggestions. It therefore makes the following recommendation:

> That layoffs be made by the appointing authorities in accordance with rules adopted by the State Board of Public Assistance, and that these rules recognize seniority, efficiency, and knowledge of the job as legitimate factors to be taken into account in determining the order in which employes are to be laid off. The names of employes who are laid off should be placed upon appropriate re-employment lists in such order that the names of those who are laid off last will be at the head of the list.

Of the three factors just mentioned, seniority is the easiest to use, but not always the best; nor should it ever be used to the exclusion of all other factors. If it is the only factor used, the last person employed in a given class would invariably be the first to be dropped from the payroll. While this method has in it an element of fairness, in that it recognizes the superior claims to retention of the worker who has served the department for the longer period, it fails to take into account any claim based upon superior efficiency. Other things being equal, however, the rule of seniority should be followed.

Efficiency is a better basis for retention and layoffs than seniority, but it is more difficult to ascertain. Here again the need of a reliable system of efficiency rating is apparent. Where careful efficiency records are kept, efficiency ought not only to be used as a factor in layoffs, but it should be weighted more heavily than seniority. Some authorities in the personnel field would make it the only factor in layoffs. In the absence of currently kept efficiency records, the appraisal of the appointing authorities at the time of layoff may be used instead, but such appraisal is not likely to be as trustworthy as a currently kept record.

The third factor, knowledge of the job, may be used as a substitute for efficiency. It is, in fact, an aspect of efficiency, for it is to be presumed that a highly efficient person knows his job well, and that a less efficient person is less conversant with his job, though this is not invariably true. A distinct advantage of using this factor is that it can be ascertained by a central agency and by a method uniform in its application to all units of the department. A written test may be given to all employes in the class effected, the questions in the test being designed to gauge the worker's familiarity with the job he is doing. This is one of the methods used by the State Emergency Relief Board in its drastic retrenchment since the summer of 1935. It is to be recommended especially where no currently kept efficienoy records are available.

## Suspensions, Demotions, and Removals

One of the most controversial problems in the whole field of public personnel administration is the removal problem. Closely related to it, and in fact integral parts of it, are the problems of suspension and demotion.

There are various schools of thought on the problem of removals. One school holds that, if the front door to the public service is properly safeguarded, the back door will take care of itself. That school would leave the appointing authority free to dismiss at pleasure. The theory of this school, however, has been contradicted by experience and has few adherents today in the personnel field.

Another school holds that ample protection is given to employes if the appointing authority is required to give to the employe a written statement of reasons for the intended demotion or removal and to afford him an opportunity to make a written reply. Under the plan, both the statement of reasons and the reply become public records in the files of the personnel agency, but the appointing authority has the final decision, so long as his reasons are neither political, religious, nor racial. This school still has many adherents and its theory still underlies the removal provisions of many civil service laws in the United States.

A third school holds that, in addition to the protection afforded an employe under the procedure favored by the second school, he should have a right to appeal to the personnel agency, or to a trial board appointed by it, for an investigation and hearing, and that the decision of the personnel agency should be binding upon the appointing authority. In recent years the theory of this school has been embodied in many civil service laws, and it is gaining in favor.

A fourth school carries the procedure of the third school a step further by requiring all cases of demotion and removal to come automatically before the personnel agency for investigation and hearing and making the personnel agency in fact the removing power. The theory of this school is applied in practice in various jurisdictions to demotions and removals of policemen and firemen. In the city of Chicago it has been applied for many years to other employes also.

After considering the advantages and disadvantages of each of these methods of dealing with demotions and removals, the Committee agreed upon the following recommendations:

> 1. That an appointing authority may, for good cause, suspend an employe without pay for a period aggregating not more than thirty days in one calendar year; that no suspension shall be for political, religious, or racial

reasons, nor for reasons of labor union affiliation; and that the appointing authority shall report to the State Board of Public Assistance in writing every case of suspension together with the reasons therefor.

2. That no employe under the merit system shall be demoted or removed except for just cause which shall not be political, religious, or racial, or relate to labor union affiliation; that in every case of demotion or removal, the appointing authority be required to furnish to the employe a written statement of the reasons for the intended demotion or removal and afford the employe an opportunity to make a written reply; that the statement of reasons and the reply be filed with the State Board of Public Assistance as part of its public records.

3. That within thirty days after the receipt of such notice of demotion or removal from an appointing authority other than a county board, the State Board of Public Assistance may upon its own initiative make such investigation as it may deem advisable, and upon the appeal of the removed or demoted employe, if such appeal is received within ten days from the date of such demotion or removal, it shall investigate the demotion or removal, either sitting as a body or through one or more of its members, and within ten days after the completion of its investigation shall render its decision which shall be forthwith certified to the appointing authority and forthwith enforced by him.

4. That, if the notice of demotion or removal is from a county board, the State Board of Public Assistance shall forthwith refer it, together with certified copies of the statement of reasons for demotion or removal and the employe's reply, to the board of hearings under that county board; and that such board of hearings shall thereupon exercise all the powers in reference to that demotion or removal that the State Board of Public Assistance would have under recommendation 3.

These recommendations, it will be observed, are substantially in accord with the third school of thought previously described. An employe is accorded the right to appeal from the decision of the appointing authority if he wishes to do so. If he is an employe in a state office of the department, he may appeal to, and be heard by, the State Board of Public Assistance. If he is an employe under a county board, his appeal is referred for investigation and hearing to the appropriate county board of hearings. Both boards may, within their respective spheres, make investigations on their own initiative, and upon appeal of the demoted or removed employe must make such investigations. The decisions of these boards are final and binding upon the appointing authority.

As already indicated, employes under this plan have the right of appeal to the personnel agency or other trial board in many jurisdictions. This right is accorded employes under the state civil service laws or rules of Wisconsin, Colorado, New Jersey, Ohio, California, and Maryland. It is accorded them also under merit systems in numerous cities in the United States. In practice, the number of appeals has not been great. It is noteworthy, too, that in the majority of cases appealed, the trial boards have

sustained the appointing authorities. The great value of the right of appeal is that it gives employes a remedy if they are unjustly demoted or removed. That the presence of this remedy helps the morale of workers can scarcely be denied.

## Political Activity and Assessments

Public employes are servants of all the people. As such it seems proper that they should maintain a degree of neutrality in political contests. While they should retain the right to vote and to express their opinions privately on political questions, they should refrain from engaging in political activity and be exempt from political assessments. In the proposed State Department of Public Assistance and the county boards of public assistance, which will have intimate contact with large numbers of families and individuals, it will be especially important to keep the service on a purely non-political plane. The Committee therefore makes the following recommendations:

> 1. That no person under the merit system shall be a delegate or alternate delegate to any political convention, or a member of any committee of any political party, or take an active part in political management or in political campaigns, or use his office or position to influence the political action of any other person, or circulate or seek signatures to any nomination or other petition provided by any primary or election law, or be an officer of any political club or organization, or serve as a member of a committee of any such club or organization, or participate in the conduct of any election save only for the purpose of marking and depositing his ballot.
>
> 2. That no officer or employe of the State Department of Public Assistance or of any county board shall solicit, receive, or pay any assessment or contribution for any political purpose; nor shall any person solicit any such assessment or contribution from any employe under the merit system.

In making these recommendations, the Committee is not proposing something new. Political activity and political assessments are now more or less drastically limited, not only in most branches of the public service that are under the merit system, but also in some branches to which the merit system has not as yet been extended. Moreover, as explained in the previous section of this report, the State of Pennsylvania already restricts political activity and affords a degree of protection against political assessments in some of the units that will form the proposed Department of Public Assistance. Under the county boards of Mothers' Assistance, employes are restrained from engaging in political activity and protected from solicitation for political contributions by board members and fellow employes; and under the State Emergency Relief Board employes are restrained from political activity.

The Committee is fully aware of the argument against such restraint upon public employes and has much sympathy with it. To restrict the rights of citizenship of so large a portion of the population as is now in the public service is a serious matter. At the present stage of political development in this country, however, it seems to be necessary. The restrictions are designed to prevent possible abuses that would be even more serious. Until the spoils system has spent its force to a much greater extent than it has yet done in most communities in the United States, the restric-

tions upon public employes seem necessary. As a matter of fact, the employes themselves have not protested strongly against such restrictions and appear to prefer them to the political control which party organizations have so often imposed upon government workers.

## Miscellaneous Problems

Among other problems in the personnel field that have not been considered in the foregoing discussion, two should at least be mentioned: training and civil service unions.

On training, the Committee desires merely to record its recognition of the importance of an adequate program for the Department of Public Assistance and the local boards under its supervision. In the formulation of such a program, the personnel director and the State Board of Public Assistance should participate, but the direction of training activities should not be made the responsibility of the personnel director. Another staff officer reporting directly to the secretary of public assistance should have charge of this work.

Unions of employes exist now under the State Emergency Relief Board and will doubtless exist also under the proposed Department of Public Assistance. In their relations with such unions, the administrative officials of the department should recognize, first, that civil servants have a right to organize for the protection and advancement of their interests; and, second, that under good leadership such unions can be helpful to administrators in dealing with many problems affecting the efficiency and morale of employes. No employe should be discriminated against because he is a member of a union.

## Conclusion

The establishment of a satisfactory merit system in the public assistance services of the State is probably the most difficult administrative problem presented by the far-reaching program of the Pennsylvania Committee on Public Assistance and Relief. It is also one of the most urgent problems. A sound beginning is, therefore, essential.

In submitting its present recommendations with respect to personnel policies and processes, the Committee is aware that it has merely summarized outstanding results of experience in many jurisdictions, and that imaginative and creative leadership in the proposed Department of Public Assistance may still make valuable new contributions to the principles and technique of public personnel administration. Until the merit system is applied to the whole state service, a special opportunity and responsibility awaits whose who will administer the personnel affairs of this Department.

The policies herein suggested are possible starting points, not final goals. In the hands of conscientious public officials devoted sincerely to the maintenance of the merit principle in the public service, they will be adapted to the changing and emerging needs of Pennsylvania and its local communities.